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Chinese Visiting Scholars' Academic Adjustment at a Canadian University

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Chinese Visiting Scholars' Academic Adjustment at a Canadian University

By

Pinge Ai

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
through the Faculty of Education
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Master of Education
at the University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

2019

Chinese Visiting Scholars' Academic Adjustment at a Canadian University

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October 25, 2019

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, an increasing number of visiting scholars from China come to Canada and international academic adjustment is considered an important component in their professional development. However, a review of relevant literature indicates that there is a lack of research on Chinese visiting scholars regarding their academic adjustment experience at their host institution. Drawing upon semi-structured interviews with nine Chinese visiting scholar participants, three host professor participants, and three graduate student participants, this research aims to examine Chinese visiting scholars' academic adjustment experiences at a middle-sized Canadian university in Ontario, and to understand how they perceive their international experiences in connection with their professional development. Based on participants' reports of their motivations, expectations, challenges and strategies during their visits, this research attempts to understand Chinese visiting scholars' international academic experience. This research also offers some suggestions to future international visiting scholars on how to engage in a new academic community, and to members of host institutions—including faculty members and graduate students—on how to benefit from the diverse expertise of international visiting scholars.

Keywords: academic adjustment, Chinese visiting scholars, cross-cultural adaptation, teacher professional development

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

During my two years of academic pursuing experience, I met many academics at a middle-sized university in Ontario. During my coursework taking, all instructors demonstrated their question-discussing, topic-debating, and student-centred learning classes, which benefited my future teaching. When I presented my research proposal by a poster at a Canadian university conference, my audience patiently listened to me and shared their valuable ideas with me, which helped me optimize my research method and provided new perspectives for this research. I was deeply impressed by this idea sharing academic environment.

Dr. Zuochen Zhang, my supervisor, was the first person I would like to thank. He supported me from my first day when I entered his classroom. He continued to guide me with how to write an abstract and how to present a poster for a conference; he also helped me with outlining thesis paragraphs, modifying interview questions, preparing research ethics document, and reviewing this thesis. With his supports, I became more and more confident about my English writing and qualitative research.

I would also like to thank my thesis committee members: Dr. Shijing Xu and Dr. Jianwen Yang, for their critical review of, valuable suggestions for, and comments on my thesis. Their instructions guided me to move forward in my future research.

I also would like to present thanks to all the Chinese visiting scholar participants, host professor participants, and graduate student participants who participated in my research. They shared all their wonderful stories with me, and I have learned a lot from their experiences.

In addition, I would like to thank Sarah Braganza, a staff from the Research Ethics Board office. We met once a week patiently and taught me how to identify the potential risks and how to minimize the harms that my participants may get.

I presented more thanks to the Writing Support staff in Leddy library, especially Jason Horn, who considerately allowed me to discuss my research ideas with him and taught me how to write academically. Jason's writing support facilitated my language improvement which made me more confident with my teaching work.

Finally, I would thank my son and my husband for their support and encouragement.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

With China's rapid economic development in the past few decades, building

world-class higher education institutions and world-class disciplines (Ministry of

Education [MOE] of the People's Republic of China, 2018) has become a high priority of

the country. One of the measures for this goal is to send faculty members to developed

countries as visiting scholars as a way to encourage professional development. The

internationalization of university curriculum aiming at aligning curriculum with

international standards also drives scholars to go abroad for academic collaboration (Liu

& Dai, 2012; Liu & Jiang, 2015). Due to the impacts of internationalization and

competition within the global knowledge economy, China has consistently been the

leading country to send the highest number of visiting scholars abroad (Institute of

International Education [IIE], 2019).

At the national level, China Scholarship Council (CSC), a non-profit organization

under the leadership of the Chinese MOE, provides support for international academic

exchange between China and other countries (CSC, n.d.), and Chinese scholars who

receive support include PhD students, post-doctoral fellows, and researchers and

"backbone"[1] teachers at higher education institutions. In addition to CSC, other

organizations at the provincial and institutional levels also sponsor visiting scholars to

visit international higher education institutions.

The CSC was founded in 1996. Since then, the number of Chinese visiting

scholars who go abroad to gain international experience has increased every year. In its

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[1] Xi (2017) defines backbone teachers as university teachers and researchers who have
made breakthroughs in education and teaching, scientific and technological research, and
can lead higher-level innovation teams in China.

first year, the program had 2,044 participants (Xue et al., 2015), a number that saw a 530% increase by 2018, when the program had 12,900 participants (CSC, 2018a). As the number of visitors grew, the financial input also expanded. The yearly expense that is given for every member is more than 20,000 Canadian dollars. From 2015 to 2018, the total financial support for the Chinese Visiting Scholar Programs reached one billion CND (Central People's Government, 2014; CSC, 2016a, 2016b, 2018a).

In recent years, overseas training experience or international communication competence has become one of the basic requirements for university academics to get professional promotions. International visits and exchanges have become necessary for higher educational institutions to compete, and at some institution, international academic experience is becoming a requirement for their faculty members who seek promotion.

Problem Statement

In the context of China's national policy to support more visits and exchanges that are international, there has been a significant increase in Chinese visiting scholars who travel and study abroad, but the research exploring Chinese visiting scholars' international academic experiences is limited. Previous research on sojourners focuses on three kinds of populations: international students (e.g., Antony, 2002; Rosser, 2004), faculty, including teachers in preservice education (e.g., Anderson & Seashore, 1991; Leeman & Ledoux, 2003), and immigrants (Sonn, 2002). As their knowledge-acquisition styles and identities are different from international students, preservice teachers, and immigrants, visiting scholars do not belong to any of those categories.

While living in other cultures, sojourners face challenges, such as culture shock, language barrier, academic adaptation, limited cross-cultural competence, including

knowledge, skills, unsatisfactory academic integration, homesickness, loneliness, and prejudice and discrimination (Kim & Abreu, 2001; Lee, Koeske & Sales, 2004; Mori, 2000; Russell, Rosenthal & Thomson, 2010). As sojourners, Chinese visiting scholars face similar and different challenges mentioned above. For instance, Xue et al. (2015) explored 15 Chinese visiting scholars' academic socialization experiences in An American university and found that Chinese visiting scholars face marginalization, time constraints, and external public criticism about spending public resources on traveling and taking care of their children rather than focusing on academic exchanges.

An investigation of international visiting scholars' experiences, especially their academic experiences, has the potential to provide critical insights into policymaking, services, and capital allocation as they relate to such initiatives.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this study was to investigate how Chinese visiting scholars perceive their Canadian academic experiences and how they adjust themselves to the Canadian academic culture. This study specifically explores their motivations to engage in the program, academic endeavours, academic interaction with the host fellows, academic outcomes, and challenges and strategies they used based on their experiences and perspectives of the host institutional culture and service. This study provides suggestions for future visitors who come to Canada, raise the awareness of host institutional members, and underscore the need to provide more support for future visiting scholars. This inquiry also serves as an additional discourse that explores whether the Visiting Scholar Programs are an effective way for academics' professional development.

Significance of the Study

It is important to examine the experiences of Chinese visiting scholars in a Canadian postsecondary institution and the connections of the experiences to their professional development as university academics. First, Chinese visiting scholars function as cultural meditators who maintain the Canada-China networks, partnerships, and collaborations in academic excellence and innovation (Wang, 2013). Thus, it is important for host institutions (post-secondary institutions that provide Visiting Scholar Programs and accept international scholars who visit as professionals) to understand the experiences of visiting scholars so that they can incorporate strategies that improve the effectiveness of Visiting Scholar Programs. Second, the Chinese national government, provincial finance departments, and institutional financial agencies highly regard this visit as an important resource that lead to the professional development for Chinese faculty. Therefore, understanding their experiences may help Chinese sponsoring organizations at national, provincial, and institutional levels implement Visiting Scholar Programs more effectively. Third, comprehension of visiting scholar's experiences may provide practical advice with a reference point that can inform their pre-departure preparation, goal setting, and plans to maximize their time abroad. In addition, this study highlights the academic and professional opportunities that faculty and graduate students can attain by engaging in the Chinese Visiting Scholar Programs.

Research Questions

Volet (1999) holds that "Each specific learning context appears to have its own unique culture of learning" (p. 626). Canada's academic environment has unique characteristics that are different from Chinese academic settings. For example, the

University of Alberta ("Academic Culture", 2019) clearly describes the features of Canadian academic culture: "Most professors supplement and clarify textbook information during class time. Innovative approaches to problem solving are valued and intellectual disagreements are expected." In China, it is embarrassing for someone in authority to say, "I don't know," while it is acceptable in Canada. How do Chinese visiting scholars adjust to the new learning environment? What kinds of academic endeavours do they take in the new academic milieu? The process of the academic adjustment and the academic achievement, factors influencing adjustment, and their responses to the obstacles they encountered in the pursuit of professional growth are analyzed. Kim (1988) holds that the "concern, therefore, is not whether individuals adapt, but how" (p. 9). Coe (1972) and Anderson (1994) also suggest that the process of adjustment is unique and personal. Anderson also states that the degrees and shapes of sojourner's adjustment, or maladjustment depend on how the individual doing the adjusting and on the condition within which their adjustments take place. Transferring from the home academic environment to the Canadian one, what kind of personal academic experiences do Chinese scholars encounter? The research questions are:

1. How do Chinese visiting scholars perceive their academic experiences at a middle-sized university in Ontario?

2. How do Chinese visiting scholars' Canadian academic experiences influence their personal growth and professional development?

3. What can Chinese visiting scholars and the host institution do to benefit more from the Chinese Visiting Scholar Programs?

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews the terminology relating to adjustment, theoretical framework, teacher professional development programs, China's higher educational reform policy, new assessment on higher educational faculty members' work, the profile of Chinse visiting scholars, the concept of academic adjustment, and the current research on Chinese visiting scholars' international experiences.

Terminology

When a person enters a new environment, he or she needs to make changes in different aspects. "Adjustment," "acculturation," and "adaptation" are the terms that are interchangeably used to describe this process.

These terms overlap and are used interchangeably to refer to the process that sojourners experience in a new culture (kim, 1988; Searle & Ward, 1990). However, in some disciplines, the definitions of these terms vary, and this inconsistent use of the terminology is one of the problematic challenges within research on intercultural adjustment. To avoid the confusion, it is necessary to define acculturation and adaptation and then define adjustment within the context of inter-discipline.

Acculturation

Acculturation originally comes from the academic discipline of anthropology. It is defined as a phenomenon that is the result of "groups of individuals having different cultures coming into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups" (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936, p. 149). The results of acculturation come into three forms, acceptance, adaptation, and reaction. Acceptance refers to an acceptance of a large portion of another culture and a

loss of greater amount of home culture followed by assimilation of both behaviour patterns and the inner values of host culture. Adaptation is the combination of both original and other cultural traits and produces "a smoothly functioning cultural whole" (Redfield et al., 1936, p. 152). In the field of cross-cultural psychology, French-language researchers developed a parallel concept, interculturation. The French concept, interculturation, was translated by Berry (1997) as "the set of processes by which individuals and groups interact when they identify themselves as culturally distinct" (p. 8). The term "interculturation" shares evident similarities with acculturation. Later, "acculturation" was transferred into the sociocultural field and was publicly recognized as "the process of becoming communicatively competent in a culture we have not been raised in" (Hall, 2005, p. 270). Hall redeemed that acculturation is the cultural adjustment period when sojourners travel to cultures that are different from home culture. He further explained the four stages of acculturation: honeymoon, crisis, recovery, and adjustment.

Adaptation

Adaptation was first introduced by the naturalist, Charles Darwin and was later used widely in biology literature. It refers to the natural selection process through which an animal or plant species fits to its environment by adjusting (Gittleman, n.d.). Beyond Darwin's evolution, the subjects of adaptation shift from animals and plants to migrant peoples, including immigrants, sojourners, and refugees. Later, this term was adopted in psychology (Zhu, 2012). For example, Kim (1988) depicts adaptation as a dynamic state of fluidity rather than a static state of achievement, and she suggests that the term is useful when conceiving "the cross-cultural adaptation as a transcendental process rather than as a transitional process" (p. 417). Berry (1997) defines adaptation as the

psychological changes and the eventual outcomes and results of sojourners' acculturation experiences. Berry partially agrees with Kim's explanation: he agrees that adaptation is a psychological process of change but argues that adaptation is the eventual results of sojourners' acculturation process. He extends the concept of adaptation in a broader sense, framing it as the final phase of cross-cultural adjustment or adaptation experience—the results of sojourners' psychological and behavioural changes. Other scholars (e.g., Sussman, 2000) further support Berry's opinion by defining adaptation as the final achievement and the "endpoint" of the process of unfamiliar-culture coping, and it is a dynamic process, which involves psychological changes.

Adjustment

The definition of adjustment varies from one academic discipline to another. Some have adopted a psychological perspective of the term; while others have framed it in a sociological context; whereas, some researchers adopted this term in an interdisciplinary approach.

Psychological adjustment. In psychology, adjustment refers to the behavioural process through which humans and other animals maintain a balance among their various needs and the barriers of their environments ("Adjustment: Psychology," n.d.). Adjustment begins when one feels the motivation to change, and/or the need to remove the impediment, and/or the will to solve a real-life problem.

Sociological adjustment. In a sociological context, adjustment happens when people strive to balance their surroundings and to meet their psychological needs, such as love or affirmation, through social networks. Changes in one's surroundings particularly impel interpersonal activity meant to satisfy those needs. Ongoing difficulties in social

and cultural adjustment may be accompanied by anxiety or depression ("Adjustment: Psychology," n.d.). In the field of sociology, researchers use the terms "adjustment" and "adaptation" to refer to sojourners' achievement when they cope with an unfamiliar environment or another culture. However, some researchers have observed some differences. For example, Shaffer, Harrison, and Gilley (1999) define adjustment as a short-term reduction or satisfaction of drives, whereas they define adaptation as having long-term value for individual or racial survival. They also argue that although the timeframe differs, both terms cover the same concept—people acclimating to their environments. Sussman (2000), in contrast separates adaptation from adjustment in a different manner. She suggests that adaptation refers to achievements that sojourners secured at the endpoint of a course of study, whereas adjustment is an active process that sojourners employ to interact with the unfamiliar culture.

Psychological and sociocultural adjustment. Drawing on conceptual frameworks used in current research and their own empirical studies on sojourners' cross-cultural transitions, Ward and her colleagues argue that sojourners' cross-cultural adaptation is best investigated in terms of two adjustment outcomes: psychological (emotional/affective) and sociocultural (behavioural) adjustments (Searle & Ward, 1990; Ward & Kennedy, 1993a, 1994, 1999). Psychological adjustment originally derives from the stress and coping framework and emphasizes emotional well-being and satisfaction with new experiences in a host culture. Psychological adjustment is claimed to be broadly affected by personality, life changes, stress-coping styles, satisfaction with co-nationals, and social support from host nationals; Sociocultural adjustment originates from the learning and cognitive models and stresses fit-in abilities and the interactive skills from

aspects of host cultural context. Sociocultural adjustment is claimed to be best interpreted in the length of new culture residence, language proficiency, cultural knowledge, cultural distance, and the quantity of contact with host nationals. Social cognition models highlight that the cross-cultural adjustment process is affected by expectations, values, attitudes, and perceptions.

Ward and her colleagues (Ward & Kennedy, 1993a, 1993b, 1994; Ward & Rana-Deuba, 1999) continued to claim that these two dimensions of adjustment, although interrelated, are differentially linked to a various factors and display different patterns over time (Ward, Okura, Kennedy, & Kojima, 1998) and it is critical to take each type of adjustment separately.

Interdisciplinary model. Rather than dividing adjustment into psychological and sociocultural categories, some academics prefer an interdisciplinary model of adjustment. By creating an adjustment model of postgraduate student adjustment journey, Brown and Holloway (2008) conducted a qualitative study through observations and in-depth interviews at a university in the United Kingdom. The results indicate that psychological adjustment and sociocultural adjustment are intertwined and cannot be easily separated when doing research on the cross-cultural transition. They further explain that segregation, which is driven by an emotional need for security and belonging, is included in psychological adjustment but also affects sociocultural competence.

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Theoretical Framework

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Research on sojourners' adjustment mostly focuses on their adjustment processes and models through which they adjust to a new cultural environment. This study has adopted Anderson's (1994) cross cultural adaptation model as the theoretical lens to

examine Chinese visiting scholars' academic experience at a middle-sized university in Ontario.

Anderson's Cross-Cultural Adaptation Model

Anderson (1994) explains the nature of the cross-cultural adaptation model with four dimensions: cultural encounters, obstacles, response generation, and overcoming. Sojourner's adjustment process commences with the cultural encounter. This is then followed by the second phase, obstacles, which refers to the various obstacles presented either by the environment or by the sojourners themselves. These obstacles cause the third phase: response generation. Response generation refers to any responses the sojourners take when they are aware of real-life obstacles. The final phase, overcoming, is when adjusters perceive they fit into the host culture and feel at ease in the person-environment interaction. Sojourners' respective definitions of 'fitting' are unique as their adjustment process is personal and they make individualized adjustments to overcome the cultural challenges they encounter. Each stage involves affective, cognitive, and behavioural responses (See Figure 1).

Cultural encounter	Obstacle	Response generation	Overcoming
--Affective --Cognitive --Behavioural	--Affective --Cognitive --Behavioural	--Affective --Cognitive --Behavioural	--Affective --Cognitive --Behavioural
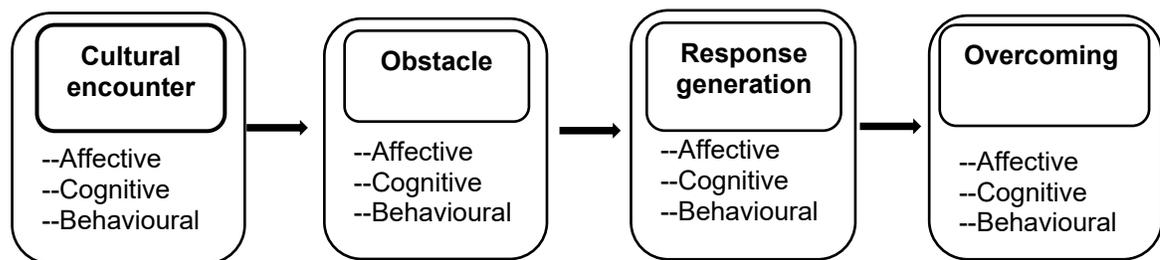
Figure 1. Model of affective, cognitive, and behavioural dimensions. Adapted from "A new look at an old construct: Cross-cultural adaptation." By L. E. Anderson, 1994, *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 18*(3), 293–328. Copyright 1994 by Elsevier B.V.

Anderson (1994) explains sojourners' adjustment process as a cyclical, continuous learning and interactive process, which highly involves sojourners' responses

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to the obstacles they encounter, the stranger-host relationship, and personal growth.

When describing the flow of his model (See Figure 2), he explains his model with some

key elements: obstacles; responses (changing themselves, changing environment, doing

nothing, and/or withdrawal); learning; alter and/or redefine, and goal.
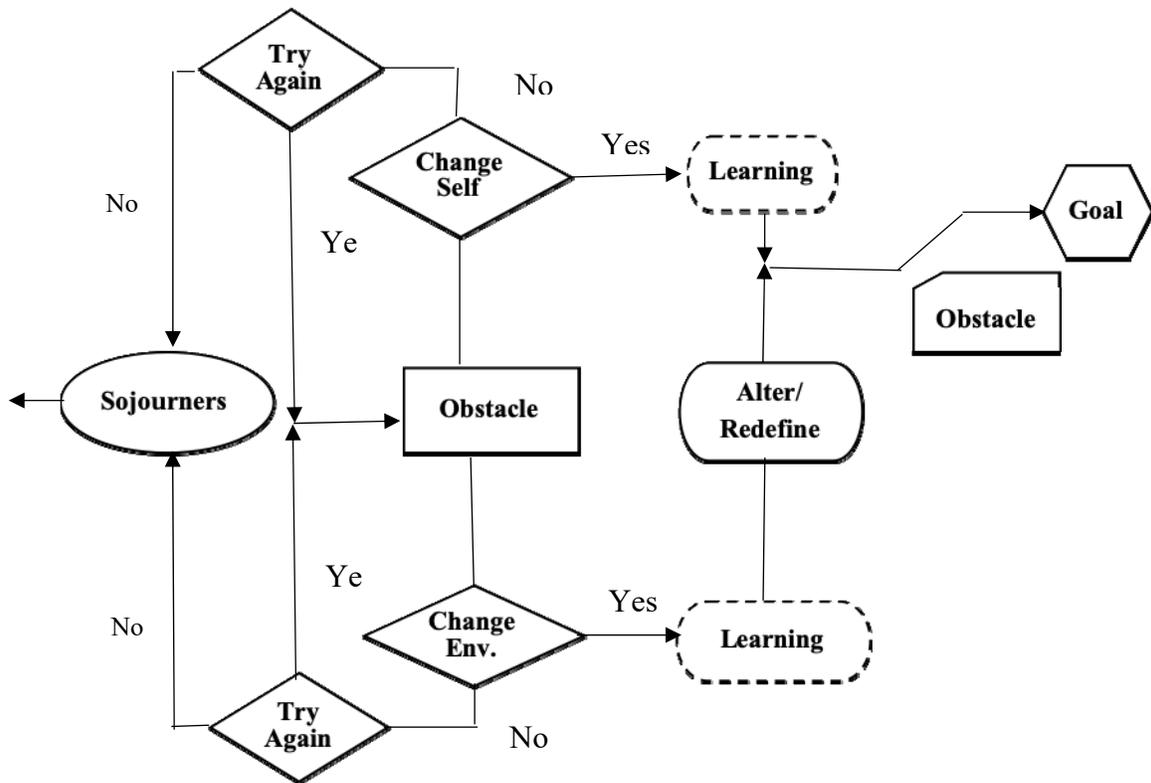
Figure 2. The cross-cultural adjustment processes. Adapted from "A new look at an old construct:
Cross-cultural adaptation." By L. E. Anderson, 1994, *International Journal of Intercultural
Relations, 18*(3), 293–328. Copyright 1994 by Elsevier B.V.

Obstacles-response mechanism. Anderson (1994) subdivides obstacles into

three categories: differences between values, attitudes, and beliefs; the loss of familiar

and loved ones from home culture; and sojourners' incompetence. Following through

Figure 2, Anderson (1994) takes language barrier as a common obstacle to depict this

flow chart. If sojourners choose to change themselves—saying "Yes" to the "Changing

Self" option—they could decide to learn a language. If they choose to change the environment instead—saying "Yes" to the "Changing Environment" option—they could decide to recruit a language interpreter to help him. This option does not occur often because "in the cross-cultural context where the sojourner is a stranger in the house of a host, changing the parameters of the coping situation often means changing oneself" (p. 305). Sojourners who take negative response and say "No" to both "changing environment" and "changing self" have two options: to withdraw or do nothing. If they choose to do nothing and remain at the starting point, most sojourners will throw themselves back into the circle of obstacles. As a result, "sojourners may travel this loop until exhaustion overcomes them, the obstacle is removed, or they physically withdraw" (p. 306). Anderson asserts that the obstacle-and-response mechanism applies to all kinds of sojourners. Chinese visiting scholars who are pursuing their cross-cultural experiences, represents a small group of sojourner population. Thus, it is rational to use Anderson's (1994) obstacle-response mechanism as a lens to examine Chinese visiting scholars' cross-cultural academic experiences.

Goal. Goal is one of the key elements in Anderson's (1994) cross-cultural adaptation. Anderson believes that adjustment is a response to neutralize the obstacle. Moreover, the interrelationship between the obstacles, sojourner's responses and goals is likewise critical. Obstacles are any difficulties that block or are perceived to block sojourners' paths into the deeper domain of the host culture. These obstacles can be objective physical obstacles or a state of internal disequilibrium. Thus, such stressors may be internal or external, or physical or mental and create barriers or perceived barriers that exceed sojourners' adjustment abilities. To overcome these obstacles, it is critical that the

sojourners make a significant effort and develop new skills; however, to achieve this, they must first be motivated to do the challenging and tiring work. Assagioli (1974) claims that a motive is a specific power of willingness to actively address an obstacle or cope with opposing force. Motives and goals not only provoke individual's interest to change and adjust behaviour; they also direct it (Coe, 1972). If a sojourner has no clear goals and sees an obstacle as nothing more than an obstacle, then no goal-directed actions nor obstacle-related coping/behaviour will take place. To develop such goals, it is critical that sojourners draw on their lived experiences to provide the necessary impetus that will spur them to take an action to change themselves or their environment. However, even with the proper motivation, not everyone is able to adjust to everything in his or her environment. It highly depends on sojourners' competence. Anderson (1994) also explains that three "engines" push sojourners towards the goal of overcoming the obstacles or achieving a harmony relationship with the host culture. The three engines are

1) a willingness to embrace the new cultural influences,

2) a willingness to challenge obstacles by using instrumental strategies, and

3) a resolve not to run away.

Support. Anderson (1994) likewise suggests that the engines are fueled by one element—peer support. The central task for sojourners is to seek various supports to expand their social interactive with the host culture.

Stranger-host relationship. When stepping into the host culture, sojourners are strangers—newcomers or marginal groups (McLemore, 1970). As outsiders or guests, their task is to work their own way inside of the host culture to adapt to the culture of the host. Cohen-Emerique (1984) claims this stranger-host relationship as an insider-to-

outsider relationship that puts strong pressures on the outsiders to conform (as cited in Anderson, 1994).

  Social interaction. Social interaction is a reciprocal process in which individuals interact with one another during social encounters. It includes typical face-to-face encounters, which people are physically present with one another and technologically mediates such as texting, skyping, or messaging (Little, 2016). Social interaction depends on communication.

  Earlier studies show that positive social interactions with host people facilitate effective sojourner adjustment (Anderson, 1994; Brein & David, 1971; Klineberg & Hull, 1979; Morris, 1960; Oberg, 1960). For example, Hull (1978) found that foreign students who were more satisfied with the frequency of social contact with Americans tended to report having developed meaningful friendships and were less likely to experience loneliness and homesickness; however, sojourners who remained isolated from their American peers were more likely to report loneliness and homesickness (as cited in Church, 1982). Otherwise, Anderson (1994) asserts that the major task for sojourners to adjust to a new environment is continuously concentrating on expanding social interaction with host nationals.

  Current literature also demonstrates that frequent social interactions contribute to academic adjustment. For instance, Austin (2002) asserts that graduate students who interact with faculty are more familiar with teaching in the discipline and the academic labour market. Interactions with peers also help them manage the hurdles of the graduate program. In addition, Baker and Lattuca (2010) conducted a study that explored the connection between three elements: doctoral students' developmental networks; their

graduate experiences; and how they developed their professional identities. As a result, they found that individuals who hold multiple sets of relationships tend to receive more aids and information. Sweitzer (2008) also indicates that developing professional networks provides doctoral students more opportunities to acknowledge institutional expectations and that it influences their professional development. In summary, interaction helps individuals learn the culture, value, attitudes, and expectation of an organization and community, and guides them to become a part of the group.

Based on the review of the cross-cultural models applied by several decades of research on sojourners' cross-cultural adaptation process, Anderson (1994) featured his cross-cultural adaptation model as comprehensive and personally based. He highlights the functions of the essential elements: obstacles sojourners encounter in a new culture; their responses to the obstacles; goal; support; stranger-host relationship; social interaction with host culture fellows when newcomers pursue their learning goal and personal growth in a new culture. This study adopts Anderson's (1994) cross-cultural adaptation model as a lens to examine the Chinese visiting scholars' cross-cultural adjustment experiences and their academic achievement as well. The focus of this study is on scholars' obstacles during their academic adjustment process, their response generated by the obstacles, their goals, the supports they may get from the new culture, stranger-host relationship, and their social interactions with people in the host culture, and academic achievements as learners and researchers. Thus, the sub questions are:

1) What are Chinese visiting scholars' academic goals for their Canadian visit?

2) How do Chinese visiting scholars endeavour to achieve their academic goals in a new environment?

3) What kind of obstacles do Chinese visiting scholars encounter when pursuing academic achievements during their Canadian visit?

4) How do they respond when coping with the obstacles to perform better academically (changing self or changing environment or doing nothing or withdrawing)?

5) What kind of supports do Chinese visiting scholars obtain from Canadian institution when pursuing academic achievements?

6) What are their attitudes to the supports they received from the Canadian institution?

7) How do Chinese visiting scholars' Canadian visits influence their personal growth and professional development?

8) How to enhance the Chinese Visiting Scholar Programs?

Teacher Professional Development

In order to develop a comprehensive understanding of this issue, it is critical to explore the teachers' professional development models, the features of promising teacher professional development programs, and the challenges to teacher professional development.

With the change of society, learning setting, and learners, education reform is required, and many researchers regard the education and teacher professional development as the underpinning to educational improvement (Hawley & Valli, 1999). In-service teachers need lifelong and continuous professional development programs to update and upgrade their pedagogical knowledge, teaching content knowledge and

teaching competence due to the continuous changes in learner population, learning environment, and teaching materials (Zhang & Liu, 2016).

Phases of Research on Teacher Professional Development

The programs of teacher professional development vary from formal school-based to external organization-based, and teachers balance the formal training with those informal professional development activities as well (Schlager & Fusco, 2003). Broko (2004) has studied the key elements that constitute any professional development system and he listed the four elements: "the professional development program; the teachers, who are the learners in the system; the facilitator, who guides teachers as they construct new knowledge and practices; and the context in which the professional development occurs" (p. 4).

Mapping the terrain of effective professional development programs, Borko (2004) also organized the programs of research into three phases. In phase 1, research focuses on programs at the single site and the relationships between the programs and teacher learners; the facilitators and content remain unstudied. In phase 2, researcher studies on one single teacher professional development programs conducted by multiple facilitators at multiple sites and triangle relationships among programs, facilitators and teachers as learners. In phase 3, research extends to comparing studies on multiple professional development programs at multiple sites and focuses on the relationships among the four key elements: professional development program, facilitators, teachers as learners and context. He suggested that those three phases were connected and each phase builds up from the former one.

However, formal professional development is treated as a luxury program on the school budget and lack financial support (Department of Education, Washington, DC, 2000). Furthermore, studies of both formal and informal professional development implemented by schools, outside providers and informal teacher networks at local and national levels have continuously found that professional development programs have disconnection from practice and are fragmented (Corcoran, Shields, & Zucker, 1998; Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001; McLaughlin & Mitra, 2001; Smylie, Allensworth, Greenberg, Harris, & Luppescu, 2001). Schlager and Fusco (2003) reported that the currently existed professional development programs are deficient by identifying its lack of "resource to address all stages of career development or the capacity to provide support on an ongoing basis" (p. 205).

Features of Promising Teacher Professional Development Programs

In early days, Little (1984) proposed five features of effective staff development programs. They are: 1) guaranteeing sufficient collaboration and generating shared understanding, effective development, and innovative ideas; 2) needing collective participation in training and implementation; 3) focusing on curriculum and classroom problem-solving competence; 4) ensuring the long-term progress in knowledge, skill, and confidence; and 5) conforming with and leading to professional behaviours and norms of collegiality and research. He believed that an effective teacher professional program should generate collaboration, innovation, group participation, practical problem solving, long run competence improvement, and innovation of teacher's professional behaviours and norms.

Ball (1996) stresses more the importance of time continuity, coaching to teaching practice, and interaction among colleagues by explaining that the most effective professional development model should comprise of follow-up activities, usually in the form of long-term supports, tutoring in teacher's classroom practice, and continuing experience sharing with colleagues. Researchers (Darling-Hammond & Ball, 1998; Little, 1993; Loucks-Horsley, Stiles, Mundry, Love, & Hewson, 2010; Putnam & Borko, 2000; Smylie et al., 2001) and practitioners (Wilson & Berne, 1999) reached an agreement on the features of effective teacher professional development. They claimed that professional development is a lifelong, context-based, and nonstop endeavour that is grounded in the teacher's daily work, focused on student learning, and tailored to the teacher's needs for career development. It aims to improve and share practical experiences, knowledge, and values that address the needs of all learners. The Department of Education (2000) in Washington DC suggested that an effective teacher's professional development program should focus on five ultimate purposes:

1) To deepen teachers' disciplinary knowledge;

2) To sharpen their classroom teaching skills;

3) To keep up with developments both in their fields and in education;

4) To contribute new data and information to the profession; and

5) To upgrade teachers' abilities of assessing students' work and reflecting their daily work.

Challenges to Teacher Professional Development

Current literature has documented the weakness of professional development programs. For instance, as Ball and Cohen (1999) note, the current professional

development programs, no matter formal or informal, are non-systematic. Teacher learning, no matter collectively or individually, is fragmented. Teachers shape their professional development life in a variety of ways: Some teachers learn with passion and pursue any chances to interact with peer in the balcony of school or actively learn from senior teachers; however, others attend learning activities when mandates came to them. Some teachers work in a school district supported with rich leaning theories and regular (Elmore & Burney, 1997), whereas, others work in a school district where little decision is given to either how teachers learn or when to learn.

Unwillingness to critic peers' teaching or of being critiqued by others impedes teacher professional development (Barab, MaKinster, & Scheckler, 2003; Grossman, Wineburg, & Woolworth, 2001). Another study (Hartocollis, 2000) reported that it is difficult to set up mutual trust and respectful relationships across schools and training organizations.

In contrast, as an optional approach of teacher professional development, the Chinese Visiting Scholar Programs feature as more competitive, more time-consuming to apply, and more costly. It is necessary to examine these programs' effectiveness and the challenges visiting scholars encountered during their visit to realize reasonable allocation of funds and make these programs more beneficial.

Current Situation of Chinese Higher Education and Faculties

The globalization of higher education and reaction to it through internationalization strategies has shaped the landscape and operations of Chinese postsecondary education. Countries, such as Canada, the U.S., Australia, and the United Kingdom, had rich educational resource in higher educational institution (HEI),

encouraged and initiated cross-cultural collaboration (Guo, 2013; Ryan, Kang, Mitchell, & Erickson, 2009). During the last two decades, as a response to globalization, higher education has made a greater effort to support international exchange programs in order to raise the profile of Chinese HEIs.

Chinese Higher Education Reform

To increase its integration into the global knowledge economy, China has been attempting to adapt its higher education system to meet domestic and global market demands (Zha, 2011). Thus, Chinese higher education reform continues to evolve through policies and protocols, such as internationalization strategies and new finance and governance policies (Chen, 2004; Huang, 2007; Li & Chen, 2011; Mok & Chan, 2008). For example, one recent policy is building world-class universities and Chinese first-class disciplines at a global level (The State Council, 2015). It aims to have 42 world-class universities and 456 world-class disciplines in 95 universities by mid-century (Huang, 2017). Many universities have been heading to raise their academic profile with policies- faculty members have to visit international post-secondary institutions for at least one year before their academic promotion (Liu & Jiang, 2015; Fedoruk, 2018). Another government endeavour is that the China Scholarship Council has been funding China's higher educational academics to visit overseas to establish intercultural collaboration and research partnerships since its foundation in 1996 (Fedoruk, 2018) through Chinese Visiting Scholar Programs. In addition to the national-level funding, access to provincial-based and institutional funding sources are also available for international visiting scholar programs.

New Academic Assessment

In a Chinese context, two major indicators are used to assess teacher's academic performance in post-secondary education: teaching and research (Yi, 2011). To demonstrate the value of their teaching, instructors typically point to the number of class section hours and the number of courses they have instructed, which is then used as the assessment criteria for teaching. Research, which includes publications and funded projects, is also critical. Scholarly journals are stratified into different ranks, and influence factor (IF) is a measure of the frequency with which the average article in a journal has been cited in a particular period (Sharma, Sarin, Gupta, Sachdeva, Desai, 2014). It is widely used to measure the importance or rank of a journal by calculating the number of times an article is cited. For instance, journals, which have entered Science Citation Index (SCI) or Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) of International Scientific Indexing (ISI), belong to the highest rank (Yi, 2011). As an assessment result, those faculty members who published their articles in either *Nature* or *Science*, will be ardently publicized by the institutions and will then receive a cash award from the institute (Yi, 2011).

Professional Development Pressure

During the process of the university faculty members' professional development, Chinese higher educational faculty face common professional development pressure (Bao & Wang, 2012; Jiang, 2012; Wang & Sun, 2014), relating to teaching, research, and financial concerns. Those pressures can diminish university faculty enthusiasm and lead to occupational burnout. This pressure is a result of the new academic evaluation system (Li & He, 2000). Slaughter and Leslie (1997) also found that the common pressures

university faculty encountered relate to time overloaded teaching, research and publication requirements, and the reviewing and promotion regulations. Bao and Wang (2012) investigated the factors that affect faculty members' professional development and found that Chinese university faculty are facing increased stress related to their career development. The findings also showed that those under 40 years old suffered the highest level of stress, 41-55 years the middle level, and over 56 years the low level. This stress may result in occupational burnout, with little contribution to academic productivity. Jiang (2012) investigated 35 China's English teachers from different higher institutions and found that the three major factors that affected university teachers' professional development are "difficulties in publishing papers" (74.6%), "Academic promotion" (62%), and "Research Requirements" (50.9%). The evidence suggests that the struggle to publish and the pursuit of research grants represents a significant stress for academic faculty.

Profile of Chinese Visiting Scholars

Vising scholars refer to those teachers and researchers who visit other institutions both domestically and internationally. This research focuses on those who visit internationally. In an international context, the term "visiting scholars" has given rise to a certain ambiguity because it is used interchangeably with three other terms: "visiting faculty," "visiting academics," and "visiting professors." These terms describe two categories of academics: those who visit another country to do research and those who are temperately recruited by another international higher education institution to teach and do research. Current related literature does not distinguish between these terms. For instance, "visiting faculty" (Bould et al., 2015), "visiting professor" (Haussler,

Paavilainen, & Åstedt-Kurki, 2003), "visiting academics" (Jepsen et al., 2014; Sikes, 2006) and "visiting scholar" (Sikes, 2006; Shimmi, 2014) are all used to refer to those who undertake teaching and research in a foreign institution. With the expansion of Chinese Canadian Visiting Scholar Programs, Canadian post-secondary institutions have received more Chinese academics as international visiting scholars. Only a few Canadian institutions allow international visitors to "teach at selected classes offered by the University as a guest lecturer" (Western University, 2019, Obligations of the Visiting University Scholar section, para.3). Most universities provide these scholars with space and resources to facilitate their research but do not employ them as teachers. Their work is restricted to conducting research, auditing courses, and attending seminars (University of Ontario Institute of Technology, 2019). Miller and Blachford (2012) defined the concept of international visitors as "anyone who studied or conducted research in a foreign university without pursuing a degree" (p. 24). For the purposes of this study, the term "visiting scholar" refers to those who focus strictly on research.

In the present Chinese-Canadian context, Chinese visiting scholars refer to the group who actively look for a collaborative supervisor or a host in international culture. This population includes Chinese postsecondary institution faculty members, researchers, backbone teachers, doctoral students, and post-doctoral fellows. As doctoral students and post-doctoral fellows are students without working experience, they will not be included in this research. This research focuses only on postsecondary institution faculty members, researchers, and backbone teachers, who maintain their affiliation with and position in their home universities when they return after the visiting period ends. Their main task is not teaching but engaging in research and establishing joint research projects with foreign

academics who have similar or complementary skills and/or research interests. In addition, their work is supposed to be supervised by the host faculty members (University of Ontario Institute of Technology, 2019). Their motivations for gaining international experiences vary dramatically: Some may be eager to have foreign experiences, some may see it as an opportunity to gain foreign academic collaboration, while others may hope to establish joint research initiatives with foreign academics. These motivations are often shaped by different sources of funding that come from national and/or provincial finance departments, as well as their home institutions and/or private grants. Due to the variations in scholars' academic backgrounds, the experiences of international visiting scholars can be quite different.

Expectations for Chinese Visiting Scholars

Some host institutions do not have specific expectations for Chinese visiting scholars. However, many home institutions have high expectations for scholars, focusing on academic outcomes such as publishing in academic journals and applying for research grants.

Expectations from host institutions. Based on an analysis of documents gathered from several Canadian universities, there appears to be few policies that guide international visiting scholars during their stay. For instance, the Comparative, International and Development Education Centre (CIDEC) of the University of Toronto stresses that it is a responsibility of visiting scholars to deliver a brownbag lunch presentation on some aspect of the visitor's work, but there are "no official policies for visiting 'scholars' per se." (Ontario Institute for Studies in Education [OISE], 2019, Visiting Scholars Professors section, para.1.) Another document (University of British

Columbia, 2019.) indicates that visiting scholar programs are expected to facilitate the international and interdisciplinary academic exchange and catalyze new research directions between Canadian universities and international universities. In addition to deliver guest lectures, one Canadian university document made clear requirements for visiting scholars. The University of Winnipeg (n.d.) expects international visiting scholars to involve in academic endeavours such as engaging in formal or informal discussions with research students, undertaking collaborative research with host institution faculty, present a paper as part of the host institution's seminar program. It is clear that Canadian universities highlight the international academic collaboration between the faculty members, graduate students, and visiting scholars.

Expectations from home institutions. Different from host institutions, China's home institutions always have high academic expectations for those who visited internationally. For instance, the CSC expends great deal of capital to support university scholars to visit international universities and clarifies that the purpose of the Visiting Scholar Programs is to cultivate group research endeavours. Chinese visiting scholars are expected to widen their international horizon and improve their inter-cultural competence during their overseas academic visits. They are also expected to learn international rules and become competent enough to participate in the international affairs (CSC, 2016a).

Bloom (2004) noted that internationalization of higher education develops an open perspective, establishes open channel interaction, facilitates intercultural understanding, and encourages people to widen their experience and their knowledge. All in all, it is the Chinese government's desire to establish 'world-class' universities, the

university's aspiration to increase their profile, and the faculty members' internal motivation to pursue cross-cultural and academic endeavours.

Academic Adjustment in Focus

Anderson's adjustment model is regarded as a comprehensive approach to research in cross-cultural adaptation. Many researchers (e.g., Ramsay et al., 1999) have adopted Anderson's cross-cultural adjustment model as a lens to evaluate the foreign academic adjustment process. This research on academic adjustment focuses on two main themes: academic adjustment of immigrant children, and academic adjustment of post-secondary institutional students (Barker, Child, Gallois, Jones, & Callan, 1991; Hotta & Ting-Toomey, 2013; Quan, He, & Sloan, 2016).

Criteria for Defining Academic Adjustment

Early research presents criteria for defining academic adjustment. For example, Selby and Woods (1966) found that the most significant factor determining student adjustment is academic success. Church (1982) also holds that "the primary goals of many foreign students are academic" (p. 550). Klein and her associates (1971) have criticized the fact that a great number of studies simplistically focus either on superficial indices of international students' academic adjustment such as completion of academic goals, or on the development of positive attitudes toward the host culture. They further suggest that the design of academic adjustment studies should cover a variety of dimensions (e.g., friendly interactions with host nationals, successful career placement, being confident and healthy, and gaining enriched perspectives on the host culture). Inspired by former research, current research also provides multiple standards for academic adjustment. For instance, Gu, Schweisfurth, and Day (2010) define academic

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adjustment as the complex process of "shifting associations between language mastery, social interaction, personal development, and academic outcomes" (p. 20).

Definition of Chinese Visiting Scholars' Academic Adjustment

This research presents a definition of Chinese visiting scholars' academic adjustment based on four dimensions. They are: 1) the key elements in Anderson's cross-cultural model, which are obstacles-response mechanism, goal, support, stranger-host relationship, and social interaction; 2) the context of teacher professional development and the internationalization of Chinese higher education; 3) Chinese higher education reform and new assessment; and 4) expectations for Chinese visiting scholars. In this research, the Chinese visiting scholars' academic adjustment refers to Chinese visiting scholars' ability to assimilate into a Canadian academic culture. The specific indices include motivations, academic endeavours, academic interactions, challenges fitting in, strategies used to overcome challenges, and academic outcomes.

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Current Research on Chinese Visiting Scholars

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A review of current literature review relating to Chinese visiting scholars' experiences found that research on academic outcomes is limited. Earlier studies focused on visiting scholars' acculturation abilities (Zhong, 1996) and outcomes of international collaboration (Hayhoe, 1996). Zhong (1996) conducted an ethnographic study to examine the cross-cultural experiences of two master students and one visiting scholar in the United Sates and found that the three sojourners had very positive attitudes of their international experiences and their resolve to stay in American motivated them to adjust to American culture. However, his study had a limited number of participants and consequently could not be generalized to a larger population. In the same year, Hayhoe

(1996) ran a large-scale study on the outcomes of returning Chinese visiting scholars'
experiences and reported that they were successful in creating international collaboration
opportunities between the host and the home institution. Their experiences advanced their
knowledge, enhanced international academic exchanges, and reshaped teacher
professional development programs. Some participants also reported frustration about
constraints from the home institutional culture relating to new pedagogical practice and
this in turn limited their productivity in research.

Recent studies on experiences and outcomes of Chinese visiting scholars focused
on value changes (Dickson, 2013), intercultural competence (Zhang, 2016), motivations
for visits (Fedoruk, 2018; Zhao, 2008), social interaction with host communities (Miller
& Blachford, 2012), and academic attainments (Liu & Jiang, 2015; Xue et al., 2015).
Several empirical studies also explored Chinese visiting scholars' life experiences and
academic outcomes. For example, Zhao (2008) investigated 27 Chinese visiting scholars'
American experiences and found that motivations to travel abroad included learning
advanced academic theories and exchanging ideas with counterparts. Zhao's research
indicated that English language proficiency was the most critical barrier in their
participants' academic pursuit, and that locating housing and limited access to library
resources impeded visitors' academic adjustment. Zhang (2016) likewise examined the
factors affecting visitors' intercultural competence development in both the United
Kingdom and the United States. Zhang's study suggested that five factors significantly
influenced visiting scholars' intercultural competence development: self-confidence,
foreign language skills/proficiency, open-mindedness, knowledge about the host
country/culture, and experiences with cultural difference. Miller and Blachford (2012)

also investigated Chinese visiting scholars' social interaction with Canadian people and asserted that the presence of visiting scholars could further internationalize the Canadian community by enhancing cross-cultural communication and understanding.

These studies focused on visitors' everyday life experiences and communication competence. However, only three studies in the current literature review explored Chinese visitors' academic adjustment experiences: Guo and Wei (2012), Xue et al. (2015), and Liu and Jiang (2015). Each of these studies confirmed that language competence is the most challenging barrier that visiting scholars experienced during their visits. Guo and Wei's (2012) findings specifically indicated that, unlike international students, Chinese visiting scholars did not receive adequate administrative support, supervision, or mentorship. They also reported that limited financial support hindered visiting scholars' further interaction with the host culture. In addition, Xue et al. (2015) reported that though visiting scholars believed their international experiences benefit their teaching and research; some of their peers were critical of such visits and believed some visiting scholars wasted national capital resources and did not concentrate on their academic work. This was also supported by Liu and Jiang's (2015) research, which found that matching research interests between the host and Chinese visiting scholars facilitated visiting scholars' academic achievement. Each of these studies explored the external and internal factors affecting visitors' academic experiences and achievement. However, no systematic research has examined visiting scholars' personal responses to their academic challenges when they were in a new academic culture, nor have studies considered the short- and long-term connection between the internationalization of Chinese higher

education and Chinese teacher professional development. Thus, this study has attempted to address these gaps in the literature.

Summary

Using Anderson's (1994) model of cross-cultural adaptation as a conceptual framework, this study has aimed to investigate the experiences, which have improved and/or impeded academic collaboration and teacher professional development within the Chinese Canadian postsecondary institutional context. Anderson's framework was used to examine Chinese visiting scholars' positive and negative experiences. This approach builds on the extend literature, which views people and their community as a dynamic reciprocal process that is based on their personal interpretation of events, and the ways they perceive their obstacles in a new culture (Stevens & Walker, 1996). This study sought to examine Chinese visiting scholars' perspectives on their personal experience of academic pursuit in a middle-sized university in Ontario through an in-depth interviewing process. Such understanding provided additional knowledge about ways in which both home and host universities could further foster Chinese visiting scholars' academic adjustment process.

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study aimed to understand overseas academic experiences of Chinese visiting scholars at a middle-sized university in Ontario by examining the challenges they experienced, strategies they employed to maximize their achievement for their academic visit, and their perceived value of the visits in their professional development. To understand how the research model employed by this study was able to collect data that offered insights into this issue, it was important to outline the merits of the research design, research site, participants selection, the data collection method, research ethics, and data analysis. It was likewise important to reflect upon my role.

Research Design

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2018) believed that a qualitative research approach provides flexible and data-driven research by exploring issues beneath the surface of behaviours. Gonzalez, Brown, and Slate (2008) also noted a qualitative approach could provide an in-depth and detailed understanding of certain phenomena, attitudes, and intentions. This was what this study sought to uncover; thus, this study employed a qualitative approach.

Creswell (2013) states that case studies are a qualitative research approach that require a researcher to explore a real-world system or systems "through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information, and reports a case description and case themes" (p. 110). The case study method has several strengths. For example, it can provide a thorough and in-depth analysis of a phenomenon within its natural situation (Yin, 2013). This study sought to understand how and why Chinese visiting scholars in a

Canadian educational setting respond to their academic challenges during their academic pursuit, thus, the use of case studies was the ideal qualitative approach.

Research Site

The research was conducted at a Canadian mid-sized university, which has a diverse range of cultures and nationalities and a significant international student population. This has in turn facilitated a number of international exchange programs and has aroused visiting scholars' interests. Moreover, the site provided me with convenient access to the participants.

The Profile of Participants

Purposeful sampling (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011) was used to recruit major participants—Chinese visiting scholars who have been in Canada for ten months or longer. After obtaining approval from the Research Ethics Board at a Canadian mid-sized university, I began recruiting participants through WeChat, a popular Chinese social media platform equivalent to Twitter or Facebook that is widely used among Chinese visiting scholars at the target university. To do this, I asked one of the administrators of the WeChat group for Chinese visiting scholars to post an invitation letter on this media platform, inviting visiting scholars who stayed in Canada for ten months or longer to participate in the study. There were about 160 Chinese visiting scholars in this group, and nine participants who represented a variety of disciplines were recruited.

The visiting scholar participants were affiliated with different Chinese universities. They had a Master's or Ph.D. degree and had years of teaching and research experience before visiting Canada. Their experience in academia helped them adapt to new

environments faster than international students. Table 1 details the faculties they visited, their educational background, and prior international experience.

Table 1
Visiting scholar participants

Visiting scholar participants	Education background	Prior International experience
VS1	Ph. D	first visit
VS2	Master	second visit
VS3	Ph. D	first visit
VS4	Ph. D	first visit
VS5	Ph. D	first visit
VS6	Ph. D	third visit
VS7	Ph. D	third visit
VS8	Ph. D	first visit
VS9	Ph. D	first visit

The nine participants each spent 12 months in Canada: five were participating in their first overseas visiting experience, two were participating in their third, and another was participating in his/her second. I transcribed interview recordings into texts and then coded the data based on the components in conceptual framework.

Three host professor participants were all faculty members (See Table 2). Two of them had their hosting experience with Chinese visiting scholars. The other one had accepted one Chinese visiting scholar. His scholar would arrive at the host institution one month after I interview with him.

Table 2
Host professor participants

Host professor participants	Hosting experience
HP1	Accepted one Chinese visiting scholar and his scholar will come to Canada in one month
HP2	Hosted Chinese visiting scholars
HP3	Hosted Chinese visiting scholars

Three graduate student participants (See Table 3) voluntarily took part in the interview.

Table 3
Graduate student participants

Graduate student participants	Programs
GS1	PhD student
GS2	Master's student
GS3	Master's student

Data Collection

Two types of research data were collected: documents and interviews.

Documents

Documents related to international visiting scholars—such as requirements, application procedures, and expectations posted on Ontario university websites—were surveyed to collect information about policies of host institutions. In addition, this study included comments on Chinese visiting scholars from Xu Zhigang's (2015) blog, Wei Mingyuan's (2019) personal article, and comments posted on Zhihu—a

Chinese question-and-answer website similar to Quora—by China's "netizens"[2] from 2015 to 2019.

Interviews

Three sets of interviews were conducted: one with the visiting scholars, one with faculty members who worked with Chinese visiting scholars, and another with graduate students who worked with visiting scholars.

Visiting scholar interviews. In conformance Schensul, Schensul, and LeCompte (1999), this study conducted semi-structured, one-on-one interviews. Berg (2007) notes that this approach allows participants to describe their experiences and perspectives based on their own values; thus, the visiting scholars were asked to describe their academic interactions with local colleagues and their dilemmas, and achievements so as to obtain a description of their experiences based on their own perspectives. By examining Chinese scholars' responses to semi-structured questions (See Appendix A) regarding obstacles they encountered or perceived, this study gained a deeper understanding of their lives and academic experiences.

Host professor and graduate student interviews. Semi-structured one-on-one interviews with three host professors and three graduate students were also conducted. To the host professors, interview questions (See Appendix B) focused on the value of hosting Chinese visiting scholars and what has been and/or would be done to support the visitor's academic community engagement and mutual understanding. To graduate

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[2] The term "netizen" is a combination of the word Internet, abbreviated at "net", and citizen; it refers to a citizen of the net and more specifically describes a person who actively involved in online communities (Seese, 2009).

student informants, interview questions (See Appendix C) aimed to inquire students'
view on visiting scholars' international visits.

Interviews took place at time and location of each participant's choice, and each
interview lasted approximately 45 minutes. At the beginning of each interview, I gave the
participants an information letter to read and a consent form to sign. Based on
recommendation from the National Center for Postsecondary Improvement (2003), I
started to set the participants at ease before asking interview questions by introducing my
background and experience as an international student.

The nine visitor participants and I were all Mandarin speakers, so the interviews
with visitor participants were conducted in Mandarin Chinese to allow participants to
express themselves more freely. English was used to contact and interview the three host
professor informants and three graduate student informants. The interviews were
recorded with a digital voice recorder. I also took notes to record data that audio
recording may miss, such as gestures, stagnation, and facial expressions. According to
Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (2011), participants may provide false information for some
reasons. For instance, they may offer an affirmative answer while contrarily rotating their
eyes or shaking heads. Thus, field notes could add more preciseness to data
interpretation. In this study, the field notes of the interview mainly focused on
participants' body language, facial expressions, pace of articulation, and paralinguistic,
each of which the tape may not be able to capture. The notes were utilized as a source of
documentation to compare with interview information to increase the trustworthiness of
data.

I transcribed audio data by myself and then translated the Chinese text data into English. I were fluent in both Chinese and English, but to ensure the accuracy of translations, I followed the model suggested by Merriam and Tisdell (2016), who stated that a bilingual person should re-translate some of the translations "back into the original language" (p. 299). When this translation is consistent with the original, the initial translation is reliable (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Research Ethics

I strictly conformed to the research ethics principles by keeping the participants' anonymity and confidentiality. Before interviews began, all participants read the information letter about their rights and signed a consent form. Audio recordings were transferred to my password-protected computer. Then they were transcribed without mentioning the participants' identity. Pseudonyms were assigned to persons mentioned in the interviews as a measure for confidentiality.

Data Analysis

This study yielded a detailed picture of Chinese visiting scholars' international academic life stories. The audio recordings were transcribed and coded to identify patterns and themes. This process followed several steps (Creswell, 2013): preparing and organizing text data as in transcripts, reducing the data into themes through coding and codes condensing, and representing the data in figures, tables, and a discussion.

The analysis began with iterative readings of all the text data. I read the transcript text word by word and provided some notes on the margin or space between the sentence lines. Then, I determined the high frequency of specific content and terms, named them, categorized them along with my notes, and recorded impressions and opinions. The data

analysis was refined several times. This process involved analyzing the transcripts and field notes taken during the interviews and then comparing them with each other and the review of the current studies. The categories were labeled and sorted into subcategories by looking for similarities and differences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Reflection upon the Researcher's Role

Similar to the visiting scholar participants, I also had the experience of teaching in a Chinese higher education institution. The same educational experiences in China allowed me to understand the values of the Chinese educational system and Chinese culture thoroughly. This shared experience also contributed to and enhanced my interpretation of the positive and negative impacts the participants' educational background has had on their experiences abroad and how they perceived these experiences.

In addition, as a Master's student who studied in Canada for more than two years, I may have experienced challenges that was similar to what the participants have faced or may face, such as cultural conflicts, loneliness, and confusion. The paralleled experiences, both in China and in Canada, not only motivated me to conduct this research but have also helped me develop an in-depth understanding of participants' experiences, thereby facilitating a deeper connection with the participants. Understanding visiting scholars' experiences provided an opportunity to reflect on participants' responses. Additionally, I was able to relate my personal experience with participants' experiences and asked probing questions to get detailed information. However, according to Creswell (2013), I is the person who collects data. Thus, my personal views may shape the interview process and/or data analysis. As a result, sharing the same background and

overseas experiences with the participants may cause me to instill personal biases to the case study. Therefore, it was necessary for me to avoid over-identification. To prevent such biases and maintain the validity and reliability of the research, I needed to reflect on my position in this research continuously. This required me to remain open to understanding the participants' feelings and views and ensuring that my own perspectives did not instill any biases in this research.

CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

This research collected findings through semi-structured interviews with three groups of participants: nine Chinese visiting scholars who are primary participants, three host professors, and three graduate students as supplementary participants.

I compared emerging themes from the data of each interviewee to identify common themes, which were used to frame the final report. Mindful of my own university teaching experience, which was shared with all the participants, I exercised my 'critical subjectivity' (Reason, 1994) during the processes of data collection, analysis, and interpretation and organized findings from the thematic analysis into nine areas:

1) Motivations to engage in the programs,

2) Academic endeavours,

3) Academic interactions,

4) Academic achievement,

5) Situational factors, challenges and strategies,

6) Personal factors influencing effective academic engagement,

7) Respective expectations from three groups of participants,

8) Evaluations on the Chinese Visiting Scholar Programs, and

9) Controversy on visiting behaviour

Motivations to Engage in the Chinese Visiting Scholar Programs

All of the participants shared common purposes for applying to participate in overseas experiences, which included both extrinsic and intrinsic motivations, and casual purpose.

Extrinsic Motivation

Their extrinsic motivation was primarily linked to the rigid requirement for their academic appraisal set by China's higher educational institutions, which required them to have at least one-year overseas academic visiting experience. This extrinsic motivation motivates Chinese visiting scholars to go abroad to 'have a look' (Liu & Jiang, 2015). This criterion is written into the list of requirements by most Chinese universities and is an expectation of any faculty member who seeks promotion to associate or full professor. Without one year of overseas experience, university teachers and researchers cannot secure promotions. All participants mentioned that such requirements were the primary motivation behind their pursuit of overseas experiences. Some participants articulated that they were required to apply to the national or provincial Visiting Scholar Programs. For example, one participant stated the following:

> This is an outside pressure for many teachers who wanted to be promoted. Many years ago, the requirement for teacher's international experience was at least three months of visiting other international higher education [institution]. Later, the length of overseas experience was increased to at least six months and then, at least one year from 2016.

In addition, another participant expressed the view that having an international experience was regarded as one indicator for evaluating the quality of teaching. They stated:

> Nowadays, Chinese universities are building double world-class universities and disciplines. New international standards were set up to align to the domestic curriculum and disciplines. In order to match the curriculum standards with that

of the Western higher educational institutions, Chinese university teachers who

are responsible for making the curriculum standards are evaluated with indicators,

such as whether they have overseas experience. This motivates all financial

departments involved with education—whether located in universities, provincial

governments, or the national government—to invest substantial money to support

teachers to go abroad and have a look.

This suggested that the Chinese education system equates international experience with improved teaching ability, and that schools and government agencies are willing to make significant investments to facilitate this.

Intrinsic Motivation

In addition to the extrinsic motivation, the participants also collectively identified four intrinsic motivators: publishing English papers, improving English language skills, increasing professional knowledge including learning advanced teaching philosophies, and bringing a child along to receive Western education.

Publishing English papers. Based on the reports from the participants, publishing research papers was a primary academic need for their visit. This is consistent with the findings of Beatty and Chan's (1984) research involving 22 Chinese visiting scholars who had been in the US for six month and 24 prospective participants who were preparing themselves to go abroad. Beatty and Chan found that both visiting scholars, who were in the pre-departure phase and who had already experienced six month of academic visiting, perceived writing and publishing English papers as their foremost academic goal. Over the three decades, the writing and publishing of English academic papers are still a high priority for Chinese visiting scholars. For instance, one participant

mentioned that before he left for Canada, he had many research ideas. Moreover, while in Canada, he finished three articles, one of which was edited by the host professor and had been submitted to a Canadian journal recommended by this professor.

English language skills. Not all of the participants engaged in international academic collaboration. For most participants, the primary motivation to improve English language proficiency came from their personal interest in learning English. Two interviewees: VS2, who teaches English in China, and VS4, who teaches business, expressed their needs to improve their academic writing and spoken English.VS2 offered the following insights:

> How can you be an English teacher without having English-speaking country's experience? I suggest that all Chinese English teachers get teacher's certificate based on one-year learning experience in an English-speaking country. Otherwise, you are not qualified to teach English. When I first came to this city, I strongly felt that my spoken English was quite different from the local people. Our Chinese English teaching depends too much on the textbook, and the language presented in the English textbooks are too formal. Colloquial language is neglected when English textbook are compiled. During my stay here, my spoken English has been dramatically improved. I am quite confident now.

VS4 from business mentioned that her main reason for visiting Canada was to improve her English language proficiency so that she could instruct a new bilingual course at her university when she returned to China.

Professional knowledge and teaching philosophy. All interviewees mentioned that they were hoping to advance their professional knowledge and teaching philosophy

when they visited Canada. Some interviewees who audited one course, instructed by their host professors, believed that they mastered new knowledge when host professors were teaching the same course using a different perspective.VS2, was particularly curious about Western teaching methods. She observed classroom activities while auditing both graduate and undergraduate courses. Other Interviewees who were working in the labs focused on differences between the physical facilities (e.g., machinery) and management models used in Chinese and Canadian labs.

Bringing children to receive Canadian education. Bringing a child to Canada to receive Western education was another central reason for most Chinese visiting scholars to apply to the program. Each of the participants had only one child, and those who brought their child to receive a Canadian education held the attitude that "to learn the English language in English speaking country is better than learning it in China." They believed that Canadian language learning offered an active learning environment for communication and would therefore be a more effective way to improve their language. Upon returning to China, they believed that their children would have an advantage over their Chinese peers with respect to their English proficiency. In addition, some of the participants believed that their child's improved English proficiency outweighed their own academic interests, as demonstrated byVS1:

> When I was applying to the Visiting Scholar Programs, my wife and I both were thinking that we could visit Canada at the same time and bring our daughter with us so that she could improve her English proficiency in a native environment. My wife is a university faculty member too, but she did not get the invitation letter from a host advisor. Without my wife here, I spent two thirds of my time taking

care of my daughter. . . . Some teachers did not bring their kids here because their kids are too young to be taken care of by one parent or the older kids have already entered a junior or senior high school. Schooling schedules [for the older student] in those contexts are too tight, and it is not wise to break a high school student's study plan.

This was reinforced by VS8:

I think that if I had not brought my daughter with me, I would not have come here [Canada] because nobody except me can take care of her and tutor her. . . . I brought her because kids are faster language learners than adults. My daughter really benefited from this one-year experience in Canada. She likes her Canadian teachers and classmates very much. . . . Here, there is much less homework than in China. Her only homework is reading Lexia and Raz-Kids online. She likes it very much, and her speaking and listening skills are much better than mine.

Prioritizing their children's needs above their own is a common characteristic among Chinese parents. Thus, though the parents were pursuing their personal and professional development, several of them put their children's English language development ahead of their own professional development. This guaranteed that their one-year overseas experience provided them with the qualifications needed to secure a university academic promotion and provided their children with an opportunity to improve their English proficiency.

Non-academic purpose. Only one participant, VS6, expressed his personal and non-academic reason for leaving for China.

I do not have a very clear academic plan for my Canadian visit. My colleagues

applied to this Visiting Scholar Program, which is why I enrolled in the program.

My thinking is quite simple. Going abroad means that I could take a long-term

break. In China, I taught courses for students, guided many graduate students, and

took on the job as a secretary of graduate students' affairs office. Every day I have

unending tasks to do, even on weekends. When I came here, everything was so

exciting for my first two months. I enjoyed living here like a student and auditing

a course, practicing my English language, and learning about a new culture.

Everything here is new to me, and I was quite excited to learn something without

thinking about filling out various forms, checking documents, writing teaching

activity records. . . . In order for Chinese university teachers to be promoted, it is

necessary to keep publishing journal articles. In my discipline [Engineering], I

can write articles anytime and anywhere. Why do I have to do research here

[Canada]? I can do research in China. Doing research is not my aim. What I

wanted is to get myself a good rest from my busy and boring teaching and

research life. I need a break as my Chinese job-related tasks that made me crazy.

His casual approach implied that some Chinese university teachers suffer from job

burnout due to the high pressure of doing multiple jobs. They need some time to refresh

themselves. Thus, Visiting Scholar Programs could provide university teachers a chance

to learn new knowledge and reduce their stress at the same time.

Analysis

Data from nine participants indicated that Chinese visiting scholars identified

three distinct motivations for visiting Canadian universities: extrinsic motivation, which

is to meet the administrative requirement of one-year international experience; intrinsic motivation, which is to improve their and their children's academic competence; or non-academic purpose, which is purely to experience a new life.

Extrinsic Motivation vs. Intrinsic Motivation

All Chinese visiting scholars admitted their institutional requirements motivated them to apply to the Visiting Scholar Programs because an increasing number of Chinese universities required faculty members to have at least one year of overseas experience before they can apply for promotion. This is consistent with the results from Liu and Jiang's (2015) research, which found that "some scholars, at least part of their motivation was to meet such a requirement" (p. 449). It is clear that a majority of Chinese visiting scholars are instrumentally motivated to visit host institution to meet their institutional requirements for promotion. Xue et al. (2015) found that host professors were not responsible for providing guidance for Chinese visiting Scholars and suggested that Chinese visiting scholars should recognize the importance of intrinsic motivation during the short visiting period. Thus, Chinese visiting scholars should manage their time, and balance their personal interests and academic pursuits.

Various Intrinsic Motivations

Chinese visiting scholars' intrinsic motivations covered a wider range. For instance, one-half of the Chinese visiting scholar participants focused their efforts on scholarly practice by improving their language skills and professional knowledge in research and teaching. However, the other half placed their children's educational opportunity at the same level as their own learning opportunity. Some participants even paid more attention to their children's learning, thus, ignoring aspects of their own

learning. Only a few of the participants identified a third intrinsic motivation, that of "experiencing a new world." These scholars did not have a clear research plan and lacked academic motivation.

Academic Endeavours

To make the Chinese visiting scholars' academic adjustment more understandable, it is important to address their academic endeavours over this one-year period.

Seminars

Interviewees indicated that attending academic seminars was a primary endeavour Seven out of nine interviewees proactively attended seminars once a week and gave presentations in English to share their ideas. They believed that the weekly seminars were beneficial, as noted by VS4:

Every member in our group has a chance to present what we read, what progress we have reached… Every week, I reminded myself that I had presentation on the coming Friday afternoon, and I pushed myself to read more literature. Without the weekly seminars, I think I would have no pressure to read more or think more.

Some interviewees mentioned that it is not difficult for them to deliver an English presentation in the seminar, but it is challenging them to understand when others speak. For instance, VS8 highlighted:

I never evaluate the graduate students' presentation. I noticed that it is quite common for the listeners to provide suggestions and ask questions about the presenter's work, but I cannot do it because I cannot understand different people who are doing different research. It is hard to participate in the discussion.

VS3 noted that he kept attending the "brown-bag" seminars that were held by faculty members; however, he never participated in their discussion and only listen. He mentioned that it was difficult for him to engage in discussions because he could not understand the main ideas the host faculty members were expressing in their speech, even though they presented the content by PPT slides.

Auditing Courses

Participants outlined their different purposes of auditing courses. Some participants implied that they audited graduate classes to improve their listening skills and learn professional English vocabulary. Like their involvement in the seminars, they did not participate in the classroom discussion and teamwork. Other participants mentioned that graduate course content is much shallower that what they taught in China. They came to class to develop their English language. This was demonstrated by VS7:

> I like this course because it is easy to understand. The instructor just touched on the surface of this discipline. In class, the instructor gave us materials to read. By reading this teaching material, I learnt many expressions and terminology in my discipline.

Auditing graduate courses taught by their hosting faculty member comprised some of the participants' main academic endeavours.VS2 audited four to six courses. By auditing courses, her knowledge of the subjects was expanded. VS8 and VS4 reported that their host professors 'courses content do not quite correlate with their research interests but did offer a new perspective for them to explore, which encouraged them to look at their knowledge from interdisciplinary perspectives.

Attending Conferences

Seven out of nine participants actively attended academic conferences hosted locally or nationally. Two of nine participants attended international conferences that were held in Canada. This experience was demonstrated by VS4.

> Last year, I presented my research proposal in AIE, a conference held in America. I got to know the chairman of conference and told him that I will not come next year because my university cannot afford to send me to another international conference. However, I came to Canada this year. Unexpectedly, the conference was held in Quebec, which was close to where I was living. I registered for the conference again and presented my paper. Because it is near my residence, the travel cost was acceptable.

Though this experience proved fruitful for VS4, two participants indicated that they did not attend conferences because their stipend did not cover such expenses.

To conclude, their academic endeavours cover attending "brown-bag" seminars/ and conferences, auditing courses, and meeting the host professors to ask for academic supports. Only one out of nine never engaged in any academic communities because he was not academically motivated. Four out of nine did not actively participate in academic endeavours because they could not balance the responsibilities of their academic visit and their parenting role. Five out of nine actively engaged in academic milieu; but two of them failed to conduct deep academic exchanges due to their language barriers, weak cultural knowledge, and lack of scholarly conformity with their host professors' academic interests. These academic endeavours helped them improve their academic writing, English proficiency, and critical thinking.

<center>**Academic Interactions**</center>

When interacting with members of host institutions, the participants engaged with three broad groups of people: host professors, graduate students, other faculty staff, and the Chinese visiting scholar community.

Host Professors

From the perspective of Chinese visiting scholars, their interactions with host professors were mainly one-way. Host professors supervised or offered the visiting scholars academic help; however, visiting scholars did not assist their host professors with research or other academic endeavours.

Chinese visiting scholars' academic interactions with their host advisors had three facets: no academic interaction, one-way interaction, and two-way academic interaction.

No academic interaction. Three out of nine participants reported that there were no academic interactions with their host professors. For instance, VS6 noted that his "host professor was courteous" to him but that they "didn't have academic communication." Likewise, VS1 reported that his "host professor was very busy" and that they had limited "academic discussion about [his] research." With respect to VS6, he mentioned that the lack of interaction was because his research interest did not align with those of his host professor. Alternately, VS1 stated that the host was busy and had no strong desire to communicate with him. Therefore, because VS1 did not want to be a nuisance, he did not put pressure on his host professor to provide support. He offered one exchange as an example:

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One day, when I met my host professor in the elevator, I greeted him and asked whether we could have a talk. Maybe I did not express my idea clearly, or maybe he was busy. He responded to me that he was going to attend a meeting. It seemed that he was not willing to meet with me and I was a little bit embarrassed.

VS1 believed that this casual elevator conversation was a refusal to meet him. Consequently, his misunderstanding and his weak motivation to solve this misunderstanding led to limited academic interaction with the host professor. VS6 also admitted that he did not initiate his research plan and he just visited to "have a look" at the new country. Similarly, VS2 emphasized that she was not very active to communicate with her professor and that she just focused on the course auditing. Her lack of motivation of academic communication led to her low academic outcome.

Possible reasons. Personal factors such as weak motivation to conduct their research plan and misunderstanding possibly contributed to non-academic or limited collaboration. Cultural norms also influenced their limit academic engagement with their host professors. Chinese people prefer casual elevator or street corner conversations when meeting people to talk about workplace issues. In contrast, Canadian people, particularly academics, prefer e-mail interaction when arranging schedules with others. VS1 lacked knowledge of the Canadian culture and positive attitude to solve the misunderstanding VS6 and VS2 lacked intrinsic motivation to carry out their research proposal. As a result, three of them did not engage academically with their host professors.

One-way interaction. Among nine participants, five of them outlined their frequent academic interactions with their host advisors. However, three of them reported that their academic communications seemed to be one-way oriented and not reciprocal.

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They all noted that their host professors offered them much support by providing information about conferences and workshops, encouraging them to speak in English and giving them feedback on presentations. Nevertheless, they never provided any assistance for their advisors; in other words, there was no opportunity for the visiting scholar to reciprocate. VS4 emphasized that his host professor required visiting scholars to do presentations every week and met him during his office hours when he had questions. Most participants mentioned that their host professor helped them edit their papers. For instance, VS8 stated that his host professor would meet him privately during his office hours and explain how to more effectively utilize expressions and strengthen his argumentation. VS7 mentioned that his host professor provided guidance with regard to accessing new articles and often e-mailed him the latest academic journal articles. Yet, they also mentioned that they did nothing for the host professor. VS2 mentioned, "My host professor has one GA [Graduate Assistant] working with him. The GA helped with managing Master's students and marking student's work. I did nothing for my supervisor."

Possible reasons. One possible reason for this one-way interaction is that the GAs were paid by the university to work with the professors. Another reason related to Chinese visiting scholar's weak understanding of academic ethics. Most Chinese visiting scholars had very limited knowledge about what research ethics is, nor do they know how to protect the privacy of participants and conduct research ethically. Thus, host professors may have concerns about sharing data and research resources with them.

Two-way interaction. Two out of nine participants shared their two-way

interaction with their host professor. VS3 offered a detailed example of how his mutual

interactions with his host professor supported his academic growth:

> When I first arrived in September, I remember that my host professor e-mailed me
>
> registration information for a conference. The conference would be held in the
>
> next January. He encouraged me to register for it. For four months, I was
>
> preparing for my conference presentation, and my host professor guided me to
>
> review the requirements of conference, which included understanding the required
>
> registration information, submitting the English abstract, and editing the
>
> conference paper. During that time, I met my host professor weekly in his office.
>
> He quickly responded to me with his rich instructions and I begin to understand
>
> the English academic paradigm. On the other hand, my advisor often asked me to
>
> edit his paper for him. Through this process, I begin to know the academic
>
> English style. I often discussed with him the writing style differences between the
>
> English and the Chinese articles. Before I came here, my research paradigm was
>
> Eastern and differed from Western approaches. Now I learned something Western
>
> in academic writing. This is my biggest attainment.

VS5 also illustrated how her two-way working experience with her host professor

promoted her academic development:

> I have my own lab in China and graduate students to supervise. When I came here,
>
> I took part in my host professor's work on lab management and reminded his
>
> graduate students about their weekly work. My host professor trusted me
>
> implicitly. In addition, I often e-mail my host professor ideas for my research and

the structure of my research methods. He gave me his suggestions. When I come

back to China, I will send my graduate students here.

VS5 indicated that she was fascinated in the various Western research methods, and she

would continue to go deeper into the research methods when she returns. The two

participants really appreciated their professors' support and valued their own academic

growth. VS5 stated that her home institution had a prior collaboration with the host

faculty. Thus, she had obtained deeper understanding about her host advisor's research

interest before she came to Canada. VS3, alternatively, mentioned that he searched much

information about this advisor and communicated with him by e-mail to decide if he

would be the right person to advise him.

Possible reasons. The finding in this research provided some evidence to support

the view that collaboration in and of itself increased the productivity of researchers

(Landry, Traore and Godin, 1996) through new applications for research methodologies,

opportunities to develop new skills, and long-term partnerships. Based on the statements

VS3 and VS5 offered, it was clear that, both sharing the same research interests and

meaningful pre-departure communication are important. When paired with ideal host

professors with a common research interest, the visiting scholars were able to expand

their academic understanding of their field and academic abilities. They also could bring

a reciprocal contribution to the host professor's work. By sharing common research

interests and developing a mutual understanding, Chinese visiting scholars and the host

advisors could set up a sustainable collaboration partnership. Collaborative endeavours

should benefit the partnership and consequently lead to long-term partnerships (Saltiel,

1998). The findings also revealed that visiting scholars often feel marginalized in the

Canadian academic environment due to insufficient guidance from the advisors and host institutions. Most of the scholars did not obtained academic achievement they had hoped to.

Other Faculty Staff

All participants commented that host institutional faculty members respected them and demonstrated positive attitudes when working with the visiting scholars. Despite this, they reported that there was no academic interaction between them and other faculty members. However, the office secretary helped them with registration, obtaining health insurance, gaining access to an office space, and setting up their new e-mail.

Possible reasons. Three possible reasons could account for this phenomenon. First, the advisor was the primary person for Chinese visiting scholars to ask for academic help. Other faculty staff in the host institution only provided registration information for them. Second, from the perspective of the Chinese visiting scholars, they preferred staying in the Chinese community to other cultural communities. This is similar to the results from Zhang and Zhou's (2010) research with international graduate students, which found that the Chinese students preferred staying with their Chinese people because they felt comfortable with sharing the same culture and language. Like the Chinese international students, Chinese visiting scholars chose not to interact with other faculty members due to their different cultural background and language barriers. The third reason is that the host institutions did not provide a sufficient communication platform for other professors to interact with Chinese visiting scholars. There was no academic interaction between them and other faculty members.

Graduate Students

Based on the data from three graduate students and visiting scholar participants, little academic interaction took place between the Chinese visiting scholars and the graduate students. Their interaction was restricted in daily life and regular entertainment. Some participants just say "Hi" and "Bye" with graduate students. Others got along well with the graduate students but could not have deeper communication.

Hi-Bye interaction. Some participants commented that their communications with graduate students are restricted to daily greetings. For instance, VS6 commented that his exchanges amounted to polite greetings, saying "Hi" and "Bye" to his fellow graduate students. VS4 also expressed similar sentiments. In addition, data from two graduate student participants supported this Hi-Bye relationship. For instance, GS2 mentioned that he never observed Chinese visiting scholars communicate with graduate students academically; GS3, a Canadian graduate student, mentioned that she did not know them. She observed that only one visiting scholar audited the same course she was taking but no interactions happen both in class and out of class. She felt that the visiting scholar she met seemed to be very quiet and never shared ideas with others when auditing classes.

Informative engagement. Some participants (i.e., VS1, VS2, and VS8) mentioned that interactions with the graduate students allowed them to learn basic lab requirements, how to operate the lab machines, to get information about upcoming conferences and course timetables. For example, VS8 mentioned, "I worked with both Master's and doctoral students together in the lab. They often helped me learn about

conference and course information and taught me the lab principles." In these contexts, VS8 did not report that there were any meaningful academic exchanges.

Based on what the participants reported, communication with the graduate students provided visiting scholars a chance to become familiar with Canadian academic culture and gave them access to faculty information. However, the academic communication for developing new ideas did not seem to occur in these settings.

While most of the participants noted that their exchanges with graduate students did not facilitate deep academic engagement, VS2 noted that she actively interacted with one international graduate student and assisted her as much as possible. She stated:

I get along well with one of the graduate students, both in class and outside of

class. I helped her with understanding assignments and correcting her grammar.

AlthoughVS2 engaged in the coursework for one graduate student, their interactions are for the most part superficial, not academic.

One graduate student participant (GS1) stayed in his Canadian university for more than four years and knew many Chinese visiting scholars. He stated that he often played sports, went fishing, travelling, shopping with them, but did not have academic communication with them because they were conducting different research. GS1, a Chinese international graduate student, mentioned that he often had dinner with some Chinese visiting scholars. The gatherings helped him understand the Chinese university workplace and to secure a position at a Chinese university.

Three graduate student participants agreed that it was necessary to interact with visiting scholars and that the mutual interaction would benefit both sides by improving

knowledge and understanding and building friendships between people from Canada and China.

Barriers. The visiting scholars who worked in labs mentioned that they often interacted with the graduate students. However, this communication is often superficial and not academic. This was due to two kinds of barriers: a lack of awareness regarding local events/culture, and different spoken accents.VS1 noted that, though his experience with the graduate students in the lab was pleasant, he often felt unable to engage meaningfully in conversation because he lacked knowledge about local events and culture. He stated:

> I stayed in the lab with graduate students and participated in their discussions, but there was no discussion on detailed or specific topics. Though I hoped to communicate with the graduate students in the lab, I often did not understand what they were talking about. In addition, I was unable to join in some conversations because they would chat about something that happened in the local city. Since I knew little about the local city, I was unable to participate.

Though this communication was pleasant, it did not have a direct, meaningful impact on VS1's academic experience. As a result, VS1 sometimes felt alienated from the conversation.

VS1 also observed that, though some graduate students seemed eager to communicate, he and his classmates would struggle to understand each other due to their varied spoken accents:

> Every morning when I came to the lab, I always talked to a graduate student from India; however, we did not talk about our research because his research

orientation was different from mine. Moreover, I was not able to understand his

Indian accent and I think he may not have understood my strong Chinese

accent. . . . Our barrier was primarily due to my poor spoken language.

VS1 and the graduate students seemed interested in talking with and learning from each

other, however their accents inhibited such exchanges.VS2, who was proficient at

English, likewise, felt that she could not participate in the conversation with some

Canadian students because she could not catch up to their speaking speed and understand

their accent. The interactions, though, pleasant, were often superficial due to barriers.

Chinese Visiting Scholar Community

Chinese visiting scholar community is another important group for scholars to

interact academically with each other. Besides asking for assistance with settling down in

the host country, they tended to approach to those scholars who share the same discipline

for academic discussion and one-to-one academic tutoring. For instance, VS9 reported

that she got on well with one scholar who majors in statistics and often asked her for

questions relating to research methods and usage of research tools. VS3 also mentioned

that he interacted quite often with other scholars to discuss his research ideas. VS5 stated

that the academic interaction among the Chinese visiting scholars could extend their

professional knowledge and build up the inter-institutional partnership since every

Chinese visiting scholars has their own expertise in their disciplines.

Academic Achievement

Chinese visiting scholar's one-year Canadian academic experience facilitated

three elements of their academic development: language improvement, writing papers,

and increasing new academic knowledge.

Language Improvement

All participants mentioned that emerging themselves in a native English environment allowed them to improve their spoken English. VS1 was happy to find that his spoken English improved more during his stay in Canada than it had over ten years of formal textbook language learning in China. As a graduate from an English program, VS2 was interested in improving her comprehensive English skills. She actively attended local activities off campus and audited courses on campus to facilitate this improvement. Those who focus on journal publications—namely VS3, VS4, VS5, VS7, and VS8—also mentioned their academic writing skills were enhanced as the result of the weekly readings and presentations.

Paper Writing

Seven out of nine participants reported their desire of publishing journal articles. Though not all participants achieved this goal, five out of nine (VS3, VS4, VS5, VS7, and VS9) mentioned that they had finished two or three journal and/or conference papers. They all emphasized that one-year international visit allowed them to have a quiet period to continue their research and journal article writing.

Professional Knowledge Increase

Five out of nine participants mentioned that they obtained new academic knowledge by seeing and engaging in new scholarly practices. This was highlighted by VS3:

> When I attended an international conference for the first time, I began to see how the conference was set up, what kinds of rules and principles were conducted to facilitate the success of the conference. This was the biggest achievement here.

Those who audited courses (VS2 and VS4) recognized the popularity of online course instruction, as well as informational and communicative technologies (i.e., ICT) used in classroom teaching. In addition, auditing courses extended their professional knowledge from a disciplinary perspective and added new content to their teaching and research. VS5 noted that she learned new research methods by interacting with her host, and these new methods would help her conduct research more critically and ethically.

To conclude, language improvement, paper writing, and professional knowledge increase were the major academic achievements collectively mentioned by Chinese visiting scholar participants. These findings are consistent with previous research (Hayhoe, 1996; Liu & Jiang, 2015; Guo & Wei, 2012), which found that Chinese visiting scholars' international academic achievement covered language skills enhancement and academic knowledge increase. As some participants mentioned, "Academic outcomes should not be evaluated just based on only a one-year period. It is a long-term effect." Most participants stated that they acquired a variety of achievements, such as adding new content in teaching, changing one's teaching philosophy by encouraging their students to think more critically, being able to instruct a bilingual course, and adopting new research methods. This is also consistent with the results of Liu and Jiang's (2015) research, which found that international experiences allowed Chinese visiting scholars to implement changes in teaching and research.

However, this research also suggests that, though Chinese national and provincial finance departments have opened up a large number of transnational programs and sites of collaboration for university scholars, scholars' inaction to pursue academic

collaboration and a strong extrinsic motivation are not necessarily conducive to a mutually enriching academic dialogue across cultures.

Analysis

Based on the interviewees' self-reports, academic endeavours they have engaged include attending seminars, auditing courses, attending local and national/international conferences, and interacting with host professors by asking for editing papers. This is consistent with the findings from Mo, Xia and Kuntz's (2015) investigation of 17 Chinese visiting scholars in a US university, which found that attending academic conferences, seeking host advisor's suggestions, and revising their paper play a significant role in their academic improvement. According to Feak, Reinhart, and Rohlck (2009), academic interactions include skills like delivering formal and informal presentations in local and international conferences, participating in classes and in seminars, interacting with host professors during office hours, and interacting with other faculty members. The academic endeavour participants engaged in in my study function as a booster for pushing visiting scholars to start an international academic life. Those academic endeavours brought them a transformative learning experience. However, visiting scholars' "auditing but not sharing" impeded them from authentic academic discussion.

Transformative Learning

Auditing courses, attendance at conferences, and participation in weekly seminars and "brown-bag" events facilitated the productivity and transformative nature of Chinese visiting scholars' academic learning. Those academic endeavours allowed Chinese visiting scholars to practice their writing more academically, speak in English more

professionally, and think more critically. Among those academic activities, attending seminars and auditing courses are productive ways for them to improve their English level, enlarge vocabulary in their disciplines, and help them manage their learning schedule. In addition, auditing courses allowed them to observe how the instructors arrange classroom activities and how the instructors schedule the course teaching contents What they learned in host institution helped them build up new teaching style and teaching philosophy, which would definitely benefit their course designing and teaching when retuning China. For instance, VS2 mentioned that she would change her classroom activities by designing "team work" as the major student activity in her classroom teaching. She also mentioned she would help her students learn to think critically. Likewise, VS4 and VS8 reported that auditing their instructor's courses facilitated creating new interdisciplinary course when they return to their home institution.

Attending conference allowed them to practice English writing and professional speaking by submitting conference paper and delivering presentation. In addition, engaging themselves in academic conferences may help them with building up academic network. Thus, they could transform what they learned in the host institution to new knowledge or new skill when returning. This finding was consistent with the research conducted by Fedoruk (2018), who investigated a three months cross-cultural professional development program for Chinese visiting scholars and found that significant learning moments during the overseas experience affected participants' perspectives and teaching practices upon their return home. However, some common problems still existed among their academic engagement.

Inactive Communication

Though Chinese visiting scholars could deliver their English presentation, they failed to conduct a deep academic communication with their lab mates or classmates. After delivering their own presentation, Chinese scholars were used to keeping silent during seminars. This became a pattern; each participant took this pattern for granted and they believed this phenomenon resulted from their poor language skills, and the gaps between research methods and research content. Similarly, a phenomenon of "just listening to but not speaking" was prevalent when attending conference. Most of them preferred listening to other speakers' presentation to asking questions or sharing ideas. Two factors—language barrier and Chinese academic culture—lead to this one-way academic participation. Some of them did not have the confidence to deliver English presentation or engage in conference discussions because they worried that they may not be able to answer the audience's questions since Canadian researchers tended to ask the speaker some questions about how the research was conducted. In addition, Chinese academic culture—asking questions would bring criticism and unrespect to the speaker— impeding the mutual academic idea sharing. Though some of them were able to speak at conference, they were not used to the Canadian sharing culture and chose to stay silent.

Situational Factors Influencing Effective Academic Engagement

Based on the participant's experiences, Chinese visiting scholars encountered three key obstacles while taking part in the academic endeavours at the host institution: the clearance of Canadian Research Ethics Board, research-writing difference, and different academic cultures. To address these challenges, the participants utilized several different strategies.

Research Ethics Board— "What is it for"

In Canada, Research Ethics Boards as essential research supervision organizations, providing faculty, staff, students, and research partners with updated tutorial programs and resources to ensure that members conduct research ethically. The Panel on Research Ethics (2017, October 12) interpreted their responsibilities as below:

> The Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving
> Humans (TCPS or the Policy) is a joint policy of Canada's three federal research
> agencies—the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural
> Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), and the Social
> Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), or 'the
> Agencies.' This Policy expresses the Agencies' continuing commitment to the
> people of Canada to promote the ethical conduct of research involving humans. It
> has been informed, in part, by leading international ethics norms, all of which
> may help, in some measure, to guide Canadian researchers, in Canada and abroad,
> in the conduct of research involving humans (para1–2.)

However, in China, when conducting research with human beings, researchers do not have to apply for ethics clearance from any supervisory organization. Some Chinese universities have a similar organization such as Academic Committee in Peking University (n.d.).

When responding to the interview question covering application the clearance of Research Ethics Board, eight out of nine scholar participants showed that they had little knowledge about that. Research ethics was a new concept for these eight Chinese visiting scholars and they did not know what it is and why it is important. One visiting scholar

participant found applying for research ethics approval to be very tedious. For instance,

VS9 was planning to conduct a comparative study between Canada and China, and her

host advisor suggested that she finish the certificate (the Canadian Research Ethics

Certificate from TCPS2 Online Tutorial: Course on Research Ethics), and then apply for

the clearance from the Research Ethics Board. When VS9 registered for the online

tutorial course, she was shocked that she had to finish ten modules relating to ethical

issues in order for her to receive the certificate. She stated, "Ten modules of course, how

many days will it take me to finish? I was tired of looking up the new words. Even

though I understand the words, I am still confused about it. I gave up. I got a headache

when I began this tutorial course. What is that? Is it necessary?" VS9 gave up on this

online tutorial and switched her research method to avoid recruiting Canadian

participants. Her Canadian visiting experience would end in one month and she still

expressed her confusion about the Canadian Research Ethics Boards' online tutorials and

Research Ethics protocol. It is clear that her lack of language skills and understanding of

Western research culture prevented her from continuing her international research.

Strategies

When facing research challenges, VS9 took no initiative to continue to learn

about research ethics and had to alter her research method. The other eight participants

knew nothing about the tutoring course provided by Research Ethics Board, nor the

Research Ethics Board protocols.

Research-Writing Difference

Based on some participants' reports, all participants reported that they attempted

to publish English articles in order for them to secure their academic promotion. However,

they reported that differences between the Chinese and English research-writing paradigm was a challenge, which inhibited their academic achievement. For example, when talking about his academic challenges, VS3 highlighted that English researchers took an analytical stance when commenting on other researcher's articles. In contrast, Chinese researchers tended to avoid making strong research claims so not to embarrass other researchers. While interpreting the methods and procedures of research, English writers offered explicit explanations to allow readers to understand what they did and how they did it. Alternately, Chinese research paper tends to lack such a strong degree of explicitness and detailed elaboration. VS3 mentioned that he did not sense the difference at the beginning of his English paper writing. His host professor spent a significant amount of time discussing the vagueness of his argumentation and explaining the weaknesses of his argumentation and rhetorical structure. With the one year of academic writing practice, he was excited to have gained a new understanding of how to write about and analyze research data. He added that it was the difference between the Eastern and Western research norms that dramatically affected Chinese visiting scholars' academic writing and their future publications. VS3 also mentioned the difficulties matching Chinese/Eastern writing paradigms with that of English/Western writers. VS4 and VS5 reported that their Chinese writing style might be the reason why English journal editors rejected their articles. Due to the same issue, VS7, VS8, and VS9 took no initiative to writhe in English. They mentioned that it was hard for them to publish English articles because they did little about English publication rules.

Strategies

The Chinese visiting scholar participants applied two strategies to their English academic writing: imitation/patterning and asking support from the host advisor.

Imitation/patterning. VS3 mentioned that it is hard for him to write English academic papers and it was not easy for him to get access to English literature in China. When he visited Canada, he began to learn how to write academic articles in English. His first strategy is to determine the patterns that published academics used to frame their research statements, hypotheses, and argumentation. He then inserted his work and ideas into these patterns he identified. He stated, "It seems to be funny, but it works and helps me to learn to think in English not Chinese. The more I imitated, the more I would adjust my thinking style to the Western paradigm." Thus, one of the effective strategies that academic writers can use is to read other published works and pay attention to the patterns and structure that re-occur and then utilize them in their own writing.

Asking for support from host advisors. VS5 added that when she struggled with her academic writing, she sought out support from her host professor. She mentioned that she often worked with her host professor when reading graduate students' papers and had a discussion with her advisor about the writing styles she saw. This allowed her to develop a deeper understanding of the rules behind the patterns and therefore made it possible for her to adjust to the English academic writing standards and research paradigm. Like VS3, VS5 was observing patterns; however, she got additional support from her host professor, who explained the reasons behind these patterns. This highlights how seeking input from other academics can provide a deeper level of understanding regarding the approaches used in academic writing.

Research Cultural Difference

Difference in research culture was another challenge that Chinese visiting scholars encountered when fulfilling their academic responsibilities. Several participants reported that there was a strong sense of academic sharing in Canadian research culture. Chinese visiting scholars were deeply influenced by the academic hierarchy that exists in China. Thus, they were nervous about sharing their research with Canadian colleagues and kept listening but not inquiring when attending seminars and conferences. This was consistent with past research conducted on Chinese visiting scholars' lived experiences and socialization in an American academic context, which found that Western academic research challenges authority, while Chinese academic research conforms to the existing authority (Xue et al., 2015).

VS2, VS7, and VS8 expressed the same sentiment. VS2 mentioned that Canadian researchers asked detailed questions about her presentation during her lunch hour "sharing ideas." She shared her experience.

> I was quite nervous when I was presenting my research before a Canadian audience. I worried that they may ask me questions and I may not be able to answer them. You know, in China, an academic conference involves delivering speeches and demonstrating a perfectly prepared lesson to audience. No dissenting voices are presented in these public spaces. But, in Canada, when I attended a conference or seminar, I found that the audiences were very critical and asked "how" and "why" questions about the speaker's research while sharing different suggestions. I know, in China, it is unreasonable to ask such questions

when people are sharing their research results. But, here [in Canada], conferences

work as a platform for researchers to share ideas and stimulate innovations.

VS7 and VS8 added that Canadian researchers willingly shared their research experience

and presented their suggestions to the new researchers. VS8 described his experience

when taking part in an annual graduate student conference: "Faculty members and

students are starting to talk to each other and that is where innovation and supports come

from." Most participants appreciated idea-sharing and teacher-student interaction in this

research culture. They mentioned that they would bring this academic culture back home

and encourage their colleagues and students to interact more.

Strategies

In responding to the initiatives that scholars took to bridge the difference between

the Western and the Eastern research paradigm, the participants reported that they

struggled to adjust to the critical and sharing academic culture, as highlighted by VS2:

It is difficult to adapt to the criticism associated with Western academic

discourses, even though I am confident about my English language proficiency.

My [limited] professional knowledge does not allow me to question or critique

English speaker's research. This is even more difficult when people are doing

different research topics.

VS5 added that she just listened to the conference speeches without raising any questions

because she worried that she may say something wrong.

Six out of nine participants mentioned that they did not share their ideas in the

seminar discussion because they did not want to do so. The possible reason for this

behaviour was that Chinese visiting scholars were inherently influenced by Confucius philosophy, where it was regarded as embarrassing to challenge others' argumentation.

Personal Factors Influencing Effective Academic Engagement

Chinese visiting scholar participants collectively identified four key personal factors influencing effective academic engagement: insufficient pre-departure preparation, matching one's research focus with the host professor, weak intrinsic motivation, and limited language proficiency.

Insufficient Pre-departure Preparation

A pre-departure preparation process could help visiting scholars establish a clear research plan before their departure.

Unclear research plan. All participants mentioned that having a pre-departure research plan is crucial. VS1 highlighted that it was too late for visiting scholars to develop research ideas after arriving at the host institution. VS3 and VS7 both agreed that a pre-arrival research proposal could facilitate their academic achievement when visiting the host institution, while VS3 emphasized that his pre-arrival research plan likewise helped him participate in the Canadian academic environment earlier and faster.

Insufficient Listening and speaking skills. All participants viewed language skills, such as listening and speaking, as crucial elements that influence the success of academic engagement; thus, they suggested that the future visiting scholars improve their language skills as much as possible before they go abroad. For example, VS3 reported that his improved English listening and speaking skills built up his confidence, which made it easier for him to engage in his new academic environment. VS3 also suggested the future Chinese visiting scholars should practice their listening and spoken English as

much as possible at the pre-departure phase to ensure meaningful after-arrival communication with host nationals. In addition, VS1 underlined that pre-departure language training should add colloquial English practice, which would help visiting scholars be more welcomed in the host culture and encourage their personal involvement in conversations.

Unconfirmed Research Interests

Four out of nine Chinese visiting scholar participants VS1, VS2, VS6, and VS8— reported a disconnection between their host professor's research interests and their own, which affected their academic interaction and research outcome. For instance, VS1, VS2, and VS5 reported, that once they had registered for the Chinese Visiting Scholar Programs, they must go abroad within 12 months; otherwise, they would not be eligible to apply to any other international programs, Also, finding a host professor who has the same research interest became difficult due to limited time. Thus, to avoid losing the opportunity, once they received an e-mail response from a potential host professor, they would fight for this rare opportunity and neglect the research interest match. This result is supported by Liu and Jiang (2015), who found that many Chinese visiting scholars only pursue their experience in other countries to meet the requirement: the one-year overseas experience in order to be eligible for the academic advancement but neglect whether their research orientation match that of their host advisors. Consequently, they did not interact with the host professor as much as they had wished, which lead to their limited academic collaboration with the host professors. VS6 stressed that his failure to reach his desired level of academic achievement as a visiting scholar was mainly because his research interest was not similar to that of his host professor. However, when he first looked for

information about his host professor's research interests, he did not realize there was a difference. When he arrived at the Canadian institution and talked with the host professor, only then did he realize his professor focused on a different area of study. He believed that future visiting scholars should investigate thoroughly the research interests of their host professor and communicate with them to make sure they have similar research interests.

For example, five out nine participants—VS3, VS4, VS5, VS7, and VS9—had similar scholarly/research interests to their host advisors, and often communicated with them. As a result, they finished several conference papers and/or journal articles. For instance, VS4 mentioned that she finished two conference papers, both of which were reviewed by her host professor, and in doing so, she had an opportunity to learn about English academic writing. She also mentioned that her "spoken English and academic writing skills were improved." VS5 added that she finished three journal articles while in Canada, and overall her research ability was improved as she learned "about different research methods and tools." VS7 completed two journal articles and began writing a monograph during his academic sojourn. These scholars attributed their academic achievement to the fact they shared their research interests with their host professors. In Addition, scholars who matched their research interests with their host professors were more likely to engage in long-term academic collaboration. This was validated by VS5. She noted that her university encouraged her to apply to work with her current host professor based on the previous experience of her colleagues. Moreover, she reported that she would recommend that her graduate students apply for a one-year exchange program with the same host professor. Therefore, institutions and teachers who see the benefits of

similar research interests between visiting scholars and host professors often maintain long-term collaborative ties.

Weak Intrinsic Motivation

VS3 and VS2 attached great importance to intrinsic motivation when considering how to meaningful engagement in the Canadian academic environment. VS3 mentioned, "If you decided to pursue academic achievement, then make more friends in the academic circle and interact more with host professor and graduate students." Though VS2 did not achieve her expected academic outcomes, she did acknowledge the importance of being intrinsically motivated to pursue academic achievement. She mentioned that her motivation was not strong; consequently, she did not actively participate in academic endeavours. Prior to coming to Canada, she experienced occupational burnout and consequently she only focused on what she was interested in without any pressure. Her weak intrinsic motivation impeded her academic engagement. In contrast, VS4's active engagement in on-campus and off-campus academic endeavours allowed her to get a sense of new research trends in her disciplinary. Her experience could prove beneficial to future visiting scholars. It is clear that Chinese visiting scholar's level of motivation was a major factor that influenced their academic engagement.

Limited Language Proficiency— "Hard to Communicate Deeply"

Poor language proficiency appeared to be a difficult challenge to overcome during their overseas experience. This result is consistent with the previous research conducted involving 17 returning Chinese visiting scholars who spent 6-12 months in a faculty of education, which concluded that inadequate language proficiency prevented visiting scholars from participating in on-campus extra-curricular activities and academic

communities (Liu & Jiang, 2015). VS2, a relatively proficient English speaker, who taught English in China, shared her challenges:

> It was difficult to catch up with the pace of native English speakers' conversations and to speak on a deeper level. When I was auditing one course, some native students speak in different dialects that I was not familiar with. As a result, I could only understand their main ideas.

This underscored how language barriers prevent some participants from listening to and engaging in conversations with their Canadian colleagues.

VS8's inadequate spoken language proficiency limited his academic experience. He noted that he attended a conference at the suggestion of his host advisor. When he submitted his abstract, he found that his written English was proficient enough to be accepted to the conferences; however, he was not confident enough in his spoken English and thus cancelled his presentation:

> For the weekly seminar, I can do a presentation in English because my host advisor encouraged me to do that, but for the conference, with an audience from different backgrounds, I was not quite comfortable enough to speak in my unstandardized pronunciation.

VS8, like each of the scholars, had English training before going abroad. Though their English proficiency met the requirements of the Visiting Scholar Programs, VS8 still felt that his language proficiency prevented him from engaging in "more effective communication." This believe was consistent with other participants, and though many others still involved themselves with local people and activities, they felt that they were not confident with their spoken language when involved in academic conversation.

Engaging in local events outside of campus and auditing courses on campus were academic activities that scholars used to improve their language proficiency and thus reduce their language barriers. In addition to talking with native English speakers, most of the participants also mentioned attending local activities, such as library language training, English language programs and bible fellowships sponsored by churches. These activities helped them develop an understanding of local events and native culture. VS2 and VS4 added that auditing courses improved their listening and increased their vocabulary.

From the perspective of Chinese visiting scholars, the success of their overseas academic visit primarily relied on a pre-departure preparation plan, finding and ideal host professor, having an intrinsic motivation to pursuing for academic achievement, and their English language ability. As visiting scholars, they should be responsible for their own academic success.

Summary

The challenges Chinese visiting scholars encountered during their one-year visit and the strategies they took to overcome those difficulties suggest that both situational factors and personal factors influenced their academic achievement. Situational factors comprised of unfamiliarity with the research ethics tutoring program, research-writing expectations, and academic culture differences. Personal factors included insufficient pre-departure preparation, mismatched research interests with the host advisors, scholars' weak intrinsic motivation to pursue academic collaboration, and scholars' limited language skills. To eliminate the impact of these factors, some Chinese visiting scholars took positive actions such as taking every opportunity to improve their English language,

asking the host professors and graduate students for support; while, others passively expected more support from the host institution.

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Respective Expectations from Three Groups of Participants

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The findings from three groups of participants suggest different perspectives as to what Chinese visiting scholar should do in the Canadian academic culture.

Scholars' Expectations

Six visiting scholar participants reported their high expectations from the host professors and the host institution. Three visiting scholar participants believed that the host institution should provide incentives to encourage professors to host the Chinese visiting scholars; mentor scholars on how to do research, similar to what is done for the graduate students; and offer effective language and culture training programs.

Incentives. VS1 strongly suggested that the host institution should provide cash awards to the host professor to encourage them to collaborate with Chinese visiting scholars.

> I felt like I was free and slacked off. The host faculty should set up policy rules to encourage host professors to co-conduct projects with Chinese visiting scholars. For instance, if one host professor and a visiting scholar co-conduct a project, or co-published a journal article, the host professor can get a certain amount of cash as a reward. Of course, if they are not successful in their collaboration, they will not be no punished.

VS1 attached great importance to the support from the host institution but neglected his own responsibility as a researcher. VS2 and VS3 both stressed that host institution should

provide more communicating platforms for visiting scholars, host faculties, and staff to interact with each other.

Program supports. Two participants mentioned they hoped that the host institution could provide an orientation program, which would include language training and academic cultural awareness, in order to allow the visiting scholars to become more familiar with their new environment. VS1 and VS2 both hoped to receive more training to improve their language and inter-cultural competence. VS2 added,

> If the host institution could provide language training and academic cultural awareness for visiting scholars, we could better understand the culture and know how to communicate with the native people better.

Host Professors' Supports. Some Chinese visiting scholars were pleased with their host professor's support, which they reported directly fostered their academic achievements. For example, VS3 explained that his host professor treated him like a graduate student, had high expectations of him, and actively offered guidance with regard to how to conduct his research. Likewise, VS5 often consulted her advisor for any misunderstandings she had in her academic studies, especially with respect to research methods. This guidance allowed her to understand new research methods that were different from what she was familiar. She always discussed what she learnt in Canada with her supervisor during the office hours, which she reported helped her significantly. VS5 also mentioned that other visiting scholars whom she knew envied her because they did not receive as much academic guidance from their supervisor. This was consistent with VS8's experience. He expressed that though he got support from his supervisor, his supervisor did not allow him access to some data. This made him feel embarrassed, and

he consequently did not know how to interact with his supervisor. He wanted to see how his advisor performed his research and to learn from his supervisor but did not receive the level of guidance he had hoped. The experiences outlined by VS3, VS5, and VS7 highlighted that supervisors' guide plays an important factor relating to the visiting scholars' academic success. Those who receive more support from their host professor are more likely to achieve greater academic success.

Host Professors' Expectations

The data from three host professor participants—HP1, HP2, and HP3—provided a different perspective as it applies to supporting the Chinese visiting scholars. Professors also highlighted their expectations of Chinese visiting scholars relating to academic contribution and collaboration.

HP1 mentioned he had a passion to host his first Chinese visiting scholar and high expectations of the scholar.

> My support [for my visiting scholar] is that I worked through the process by having 30 or 40 e-mail discussions with my visiting scholar before his arrival. That is to get the government to approve their visa. . . . As that person arrives, I will orient him to Canada, to my university, to my faculty, and to our students. We established once-a-week meetings to talk about his research and his needs, and to see if I could help him to ensure getting his research done. The real reason is that to create some collaborative work and research right here. There is a great potential for him to start a research project, complete a research plan, and get his findings published. . . . My on-going research is about teaching on international students. I hope my visiting scholar participates in the research team and help me

understand more about how to teach international Chinese students, help with

mentoring my graduate students, and I will invite him to share his research ideas

with the faculty.

HP1 outlined that he would help his Chinese visiting scholars with research and

publications, and he hoped his Chinese vising scholars could participate in his research

and establish a long-term partnership.

HP2 expressed his support for his visiting scholars and his flexible attitude toward

hosting them.

The paperwork sometimes is a lengthy process. I always spend one month to help

my visiting scholars to process the document [before they come here]. We have to

go to the Dean's office, and then go to graduate studies. They will see whether the

visitors have terminal degrees or not. We had an activity to invite visiting scholars

to present their presentation to share their research. I think we should make much

more academic activities. They can share their research ideas and interact with

our faculty members more academically. For my visitors, if they are interested in

seminars or conferences, I will invite them to attend. . . . If they want to

collaborate with me, I will have to tell them what my expectations are. What I

want them to achieve. I don't want to push them too much because most of them

usually are self-funded and I am not paying them for their visiting here. That is

why I don't want to push them too much. . . . I take them as a kind of guest.

HP2 shared his support by helping with processing the paperwork and providing

academic information to his scholars. He also mentioned the reason why he did not push

the visiting scholars to do the research. HP2's response indicated that Chinese visiting

scholars have to take their own responsibility for their academic engagement.

To answer the question that HP3 mentioned that she took hosting visiting scholars for international collaborations and that she provided many opportunities for Chinese visiting scholars to participate in her research projects, and made her expectations clear to scholars. When I asked HP3 what she thought of the Chinese Visiting Scholar programs, she responded as follows:

> I paid for them [Chinese visiting scholars] to get their code number from the Canadian Immigration to get their work permit. . . . They must come here for scholarship and academic collaboration not just for personal interest. What can you give back to your host institution and Chinese institution? . . . I mean now that you get the visiting scholar experience, you should share your experience by presenting your research to the faculty members here. All that you should do is to ask your host advisor, "What can I do for here [host institution]?"

HP3 emphasized that Chinese visiting scholars should explore more collaboration opportunities and bring knowledge to both the host institution/society and the home institution/society.

Graduate Students' Voice

Based on their interactions with Chinese visiting scholars, three graduate student participants responded differently as to the support that Chinese visiting scholars needed. GS3 did not communicate with visiting scholars and had no opinion; GS1 and GS2 mentioned that on-campus academic services should be open to visiting scholars, such as ICT service, and data centre counseling.

In addition, both of them mentioned that the host institution should provide university guidance as it applies to physical documents and electronic files. This included step by step instruction on medical insurance, visits to doctors in hospitals and clinics (e.g., "A list of clinics and hospital locations marked on the map would be desirable"), understanding driving regulations in Canada, and how to legally use a Chinese driving license. Graduate students' feedback indicated that Chinese visiting scholars needed more on-campus and off-campus support to properly adjust a new culture quickly.

Evaluations on the Chinese Visiting Scholar Programs

In this research, four groups offered different opinions relating to the assessment of the Chinese Visiting Scholar Programs. They were Chinese visiting scholar participants, host professor participants, graduate student participants, and the Chinese netizens. Not every group agreed that the international visiting experience is an effective way for Chinese university academics to facilitate their professional competence. These new findings are not consistent with the previous research. Former research found that visiting scholars' international visits enhanced scholar's professional competence (Chen, 2004; Fedoruk, 2018; Guo & Wei, 2012; Liu & Jiang, 2015; Miller & Blachord, 2012; Shimmi, 2014; Xue et al., 2015).

Visiting Scholars' Evaluation

Based on their interview responses, all Chinese visiting scholar participants collectively agreed that their Canadian visiting experience benefited them. These benefits included earning one-year credits for their academic promotion, no matter what kind of activities they involved in, and increasing their academic growth by learning more academically, thinking more critically and improving their Western cultural awareness.

Credits. All interviewees agreed that, at the very least, their Canadian visits meet the administrative requirement for title promotion in a higher educational institution. Gaining one-year overseas experience allows them to get one of the basic qualifications required for professional promotion within their home institutional academic context. Without the one-year of international experience, university faculty cannot secure professorships in most China's post-secondary institutions. VS1, VS2, VS3, and VS5 even mentioned their one-year experience was scored. The scores would in turn help them with applying for a research grant. As a result, the increasing percentage of faculty who has international visiting experience encouraged professional competition within China's higher educational institutions, and in turn motivated Chinese scholars working in these universities to pursue international experience.

Personal growth. All participants reported that they were satisfied with their one-year Canadian experience because it offered valuable learning opportunities. Some mentioned that they expanded their academic knowledge, broadened their cultural awareness, and improved their spoken English and confidence through active participation in Canadian social life. As a result, some were able to obtain a Canadian driver's license and overcome their loneliness or social isolation. For example, VS3 mentioned that the Visiting Scholar Programs allowed him to improve his competence by widening his horizons and helping him with "mastering new research tools such as 'endnotes' and new research methods." All of the participants believed that professional development should not be limited to academic achievement but also cover non-professional personal growth. VS2, VS6, and VS7 agreed that they took this opportunity as a way of learning and broadening their worldview.

Professional development. The participants collectively agreed that the Visiting Scholar Programs provided a long-term educational communication platform and that its influence on professional development was both deep and far-reaching. Perhaps most importantly, it allowed international academic exchange by "mutually sending graduate students between Canada and China". VS5 mentioned that the program offered a platform for China-Canada reciprocal learning and exchanges. She added, "China learned from Canada and Canada learned from China too." Five of the participants completed an academic paper or journal article during their Canadian residency. They agreed that the one-year overseas experience is beneficial to their professional development. However, even though those who did not complete a scholarly paper were still satisfied with this program. They argued that the success of the program should be based on longitudinal evaluation that reviewed the academic outcomes through long-term results rather than the output of a one-year period. VS1, VS3, and VS4 specifically suggested that is about more than immediate academic achievement as it provides an opportunity to establish an international collaborative academic circle that features "domestic scholars going out and Canadian academics coming to China."

To conclude, all the participants were pleased with their one-year experience, with regard to their academic, professional, and personal growth. With regard to academic development, most Chinese visiting scholars collectively reported that the Chinese Visiting Scholar Programs benefited them by providing an academic communication platform, helping them develop new ideas about research methods and research tools, and teaching them how to publish English articles. Their professional development was promoted as well as they were able to meet the one-year requirement

for academic promotion, enhanced the graduate student exchange program, and brought new ideas back to their institutions in China. The exchange also offered them time to recover from perceived occupational burnout while expanding their cultural and social horizons and improving their conversational English skills. Moreover, they were able to secure free Western education for their children. Thus, these benefits enhanced academic, professional, and personal growth.

Host Professor Participants' Evaluation

The three participating host professors expected their visiting scholars to participate in their research program and the programs helped building up long-term partnership. Two out of three professor participants showed their concerns by articulating that Chinese visiting scholars' international visits were not that beneficial because they observed that some Chinese scholars spent more time with their children but on pursuing academic.

Benefits. Host professor participants reported that they firmly believed the Visiting Scholar Programs were beneficial because it provided a mutual learning platform that facilitates collaborative work. For instance, HP1 expressed excitement about hosting, mentioning that he and his scholar would learn from each other personally and academically. On one hand, the host professor could learn Chinese pedagogies and reasoning from the visiting scholar. On the other hand, the scholar, he noted, could understand the colloquial English, Canadian customs, food, festivals, and learn new research methods by taking parting in the host's research project. He also mentioned that the host faculty could benefit from the Chinese Visiting Scholar Programs too by Chinese scholars' sharing research ideas HP1 concluded that mutual learning could help enrich

classroom teaching and scholarship in both Chinese and Canadian institutions. HP1's experience demonstrates that this program allows both visiting scholars and host academics to experience scholarship in a broader and more comprehensive way. HP2 noted that the Chinese Visiting Scholar Programs are beneficial for both the scholars and the hosts if the visiting scholars put more energy and time on academic collaboration but not on the taking caring their children. HP3 highlighted the Chinese visiting scholar programs are beneficial for the both scholars and the hosts. As she mentioned, she had most of her visiting scholars deeply involved in her research projects. The scholars had taken an active role in her research. Unlike some visiting scholars who may complain about not seeing their host supervisor after the first meeting, her visiting scholars had been invited to participate in her research meetings with her research assistants and a variety of research activities and field trips.

Mixed review. HP2 also mentioned that bringing children together would cut scholars' energy and undermine the efficiency of the programs. He showed his willingness to collaborate with scholars who visited Canada for an academic partnership and help them with publications. He also expressed his understanding and flexible attitude to those scholars who had to divide their roles between parenting duties and research collaboration, though he was not confident that these scholars were getting as much from the Chinese Visiting Scholar Programs as they could. When responding to the question— "How do you think of those scholars who are not active in the academic endeavours?" HP2 answered:

> Some cases, I know they are not coming here for academic [purposes], although, in name, it is Visiting Scholar Program. . . . If they bring their children with them,

[the children] have to get up early to go to school, and [the visiting scholars] have to take care of them. That is why they do not have much time to do their research. . . . They use their government funding on their own family. I kind of understand, but it is probably not a beneficial [approach] for either side. But, what can we do about it? They are adults. They should take their responsibility for themselves. Not us. Even for the local undergraduate and graduate students. We don't have the capability to be responsible for adults. It is on their own initiative.

Data from HP2 indicated that Chinese visiting scholars should more effectively balance their time between taking care of their children and pursuing academic attainment, and that visiting scholars should take more responsibility for their own academic visit.

Limitations. Both HP2 and HP3 articulated limitations about the Chinese Visiting Scholar Programs based on their experience. For example, HP2 mentioned that the programs are not that beneficial if Chinese scholars are not active in pursuit of their academic growth. HP3 mentioned that the Program did not establish a clear purpose for Chinese scholars' visits made overseas required by Chinese universities, and she commented that some visiting scholars would appear misusing the funds if they pursued their personal interests more than taking the social responsibility as an educator sponsored by the Chinese government. She emphasized that there seems to be a trend that many Chinese visiting scholars in recent years are "very instrumentally motivated" by personal rather than academic goals, focusing on "getting their publications and one-year international experience." HP3 observed that

Every year, the Chinese government sponsors thousands of visiting scholars. How many have collaborated with anyone in their host institutions? A visiting

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scholar, when you meet your personal, academic and professional needs, should

also take the social responsibility because Chinese government sponsors you.

Then you should give back. . . . People should not only care about their academic

promotion and publications, they also need to broaden their horizon and have a

broader vision of being a visiting scholar while visiting another country, not just

for personal gains. As a professor, you must have that kind of responsibility.

PH3 was concerned that some Chinese visiting scholars were short-sighted with regard

to the potential benefits they could derive from their visits. She called on Chinese

scholars to take a long-term and broad view about their international visits by both

focusing on their personal academic interests and building connections between the

Chinese institution/society and the host institution/society.

Graduate Students' Evaluation

Two of the three graduate students participants mentioned that the Programs

could be more beneficial if Chinese visiting scholars could balance their family and their

academic affairs. , recognizing that the original aim of this program was to build world-

class universities and high-quality faculty teams, GS2 stated that some scholars were

responsible for their role as a researcher and regarded the visiting program as a pathway

towards their professional development, thus seizing every single chance for their

academic growth. Others, though, regarded the international experience as "a must"

required by their educational system, thereby failing to recognize that the program was a

genuine learning opportunity. GS2 detailed his interactions with several Chinese visiting

scholars:

I feel that most visiting scholars seldom shared their expertise or their interest in

academic discussions when they embarked on their visiting journey. Only one of

them I met so far involved himself actively in his research. Most of the others

seemed rather to enjoy themselves in daily trivia.

Graduate student participants' comments are consistent with the reports from the

participating host professors. This suggests that, in order to maximize the Visiting

Scholar Programs, it is critical to ensure that the visiting scholars are intrinsically

motivated and not participating out of institutional obligation.

Public Evaluation

China's public online opinion sharing platform such as Zhihu (2015–2019) and

Blogs (Xu, 2015; Wei, 2019) exhibited some different views on the Chinese Visiting

Scholar Programs and the visiting lives of some visiting scholars. These online citizens

comprised of Chinese international students and Chinese immigrants. Based on their

opinions, two primary criticisms were found. Some thought that the Chinese visiting

scholars misused the government funds by bringing their children with them and

spending significant time taking care of their family members rather than focus on their

academic learning. Others thought that a few visiting scholars lacked expected academic

pressure and administrative supervision and were just visiting but not learning.

In summary, the Chinese visiting scholar participants collectively reported that

their Canadian visiting experience facilitated their professional development with regard

to both in short- and long-term goals. Alternatively, the host professor participants

observed that the Chinese Visiting Scholar Programs did not set up specific goals and

clear requirements for their academic behaviour. Professors were concerned that the

Chinese Visiting Scholar Programs may not be as effective as it could be and consequently foreign (host) professors may be reluctant to accept visiting scholars in the future. In addition, the graduate student participants collectively stated that even though the Programs did provide scholars a learning opportunity, most Chinese visiting scholars were more focused on their families and social experiences rather than academic learning endeavours. Lastly, Cyber-critics stated that they believed many Chinese visiting scholars misused the funds from the Chinese government.

Controversy on Visiting Behaviour

When comparing the perspectives of all the participants, it was clear that diverging views were common. The four data sets—retrieved from Chinese visiting scholars, host professors, graduate students, and Chinese online citizens—suggested that Chinese visiting scholars' behaviour focused on three things: academic pursuits, family, and social experiences. Each group held different and disputable perceptions on Chinese visiting scholars' behaviour. There existed some degree controversy among Chinese visiting scholars and other three groups regarding the scholars' engagement in these programs.

On Academic Behaviour

Chinese visiting scholars' academic endeavours included attending academic conferences and seminars, publishing English articles in a variety of disciplines, and widening discipline knowledge by auditing courses. The four groups showed similar opinions on visiting scholars' academic behaviours. Some host professors believed that those academic endeavours only benefited the scholars themselves. Likewise, the visiting scholars did not mention the benefits to the host institution; instead, they saw these

activities as central to being scholars, who were expected to put effort into their careers and secure promotion and career development. Both the graduate students and the Chinese netizens accepted these academic endeavours as being appropriate for a scholar; however, host professors reported that a scholar who would visit overseas should focus more on international collaborations and partnerships than personal achievement.

On Non-Academic Behaviour

The four groups showed varied attitudes on Chinese visiting scholars' non-academic behaviours. Four out of nine visiting scholar participants put more time and energy on personal interests not the academic collaboration by traveling and taking part in local events. In addition, as the result of the storytelling from my visiting scholar participants, it was found that, two Chinese visiting scholars (who were not my participants) did not often prioritize their academic pursuits. They only met their host professor twice: upon their arrival in Canada, and when they said farewell to the host professor. They never used their office after they got the key from their host institution. Host professors, graduate students, online public fellows, and even eight out of nine Chinese visiting scholar participants who belong to the same community did not appreciate this behaviour. Host professor participants reported that these extreme visiting behaviours conflicted with the purpose of the Visiting Scholar Programs and undermined Chinese visiting scholars' image. Professors expressed that they were conflicted regarding the real purpose of the Visiting Scholar Programs and stated that they would be more selective about accepting Chinese visiting scholars in the future. Graduate students and online commenters also criticized these kinds of Chinese visiting scholars, framing their behaviour as a misuse of public funds.

On Family Behaviour

The four groups also noted different views on visiting scholars' bring their children to Canada. Four out of nine Chinese visiting scholar participants spent much of their academic visiting time on taking care of their children. They brought their children with them so that the children could attend Canadian schools. They mentioned that they followed the practices of previous visiting scholars and took it as a pattern of visit. Chinese parents often put their Children's academic learning over their own and attached more importance to parenting than academic exchange. Their family behaviour aroused other three groups' attention. Graduate students, Chinese online fellows, and host professors mentioned that they understand the behaviour of Chinese scholars during their one-year visit. However, though they showed their understanding from a humane perspective, they did not accept this behaviour because it was not an appropriate way for establishing international academic partnership. Both graduate students and Chinese online fellows thought it was a financial waste for scholars to spend government money taking care of their children. Online fellows criticized scholars for wasting a perfect international learning opportunity. Host professors likewise did not accept this behaviour as a beneficial approach to academic exchanges. They thought Chinese scholars should be taking the initiative to be bridge builders between Chinese and Canadian institutions because it was national or provincial finance agencies, rather than scholars themselves that sponsored them.

On Social Behaviours

Visiting scholar's social behaviours also drew other people's concerns. With respect to experiencing Western lifestyle through social interaction, all Chinese visiting

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scholar participants reported being delighted with their social experiences by interacting with local people, attending church activities and local celebrating events. They appreciated this social engagement because they believed living a life in the host culture would lead to significant improvement in personal competence and adaption, which would in turn benefit their worldview and their intercultural competence. The host professors also supported this behaviour by believing that social interaction was a natural part of life and that it contributed to academic teaching, the breadth of cultural knowledge, and personal wellbeing. However, Chinese online fellows and graduate students had different perceptions. When compared with graduate student's ongoing academic pressure, both the graduate students and online fellows expressed their dissatisfaction by mentioning that visiting scholars have no academic stress and most of them did not engage in research.

Visiting Scholars vs Hosts

The data shows that controversy also occurs between the visiting scholars and the hosts, which leads to scholars' limited academic engagement. All the Chinse visiting scholars expected their host professor could help them with revising English paper and publications. Two out of nine Chinese visiting scholar participants reported that the host professors did not want to collaborate with them. While all host professor participants expected their scholars could take part in their research and establish partnership, treated Chinese visiting scholars as guest colleagues, and encouraged their visiting scholars to collaborate with them.

Expectation vs Reality

This research indicates that there is a conflict existing between the visiting scholars' expectation and their real visiting experience. Four out of nine participants expressed regrets about their residency in Canada. For instance, VS1 expressed dissatisfaction with his experience:

> I was regretful that I did not reach my goal of improving English language during the Canadian one-year stay. Before I came to Canada, I expected that I could stay in the lab and communicate with the native English speakers to practice my spoken English in a native English environment. The fact is, when I came to the lab, everybody was doing his or her own work. The real communication did not happen as much as I expected.

Given that one of the primary reasons that Chinese academics visit English-speaking countries was to improve their English language skills, this story suggested that the Visiting Scholar Programs did not fulfill the expectations of all visiting scholars.

In addition, four out of nine visiting scholar participants reported that personal events and family responsibilities impeded their academic work. For example, VS1 noted that while he wanted to pursue his academic goal, he also "had to go home to prepare dinner for my son" and so did not always have time for academic pursuits. Thus, unexpected life events and responsibilities sometimes impeded scholar's academic plans, suggesting that there may be a lack of support for such concerns. In addition, VS4 likewise reported that she had a clear research plan to carry out; however, a car accident occurred during her visit and interfered with her original plan. As a result, she gave up her research plan.

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATION, AND REFLECTION

Compared with the current literature on Chinese visiting scholars, most findings in this thesis are in accordance with the previous results of studies on Chinese visiting scholars abroad.

Conclusion

Data from the interviews and from the documents pertaining to Chinese visiting scholars helped me to draw conclusions by briefly answering the sub-questions and summarizing my participants' academic adjustment experiences.

Answers to the Sub-Questions

The findings of this research helped me to understand the Chinese visiting scholars' Canadian visiting experience by providing answers to the eight research sub-questions.

Sub-question: What are Chinese visiting scholars' academic goals? The Chinse visiting scholars' goals/motivations include the following: gaining one-year overseas academic visiting experience for their academic promotion; publishing English papers; improving English language skills; increasing professional knowledge, including learning advanced teaching philosophies; and bringing a child along to receive Western education. These motivations vary according to different scholars. A new finding is that bringing their children with them when visiting has become a pattern for scholars

Sub-question: How to achieve academic goals? Findings suggest that approaching the host advisor and asking for their academic assistance are the primary means for Chinese visiting scholars to conduct their academic interaction. Another result is that many Chinese visiting scholars reported that the host institution did not provide a

sufficient communication platform for Chinese visiting scholars to interact with other professors. New findings are, besides contacting their host professors, Chinese visiting scholars move towards the Chinese graduate students to ask for course and research tools information, and towards their Chinese visiting scholar community for academic communication and one-to-one research tutoring. As a small group of foreigners in a Canadian environment, stepping closer to the Chinese community may make them feel comfortable and help them to settle down faster.

Sub-question: What are Chinese visiting scholars' obstacles, and how do they cope with these obstacles? Anderson (1994) classifies sojourners' obstacles into two types: environmental and personal obstacles. Sojourners choose either "changing environment" or "changing themselves" to adjust to the new environment. Anderson also states, "[L]learning may be needed to effect the change and make the adjustment" (p. 305). In my research, Chinese visiting scholars' obstacles contain those relating to the situation: the clearance of Canadian Research Ethics Board, research-writing difference, and different academic cultures; and those pertaining to the visiting scholar themselves: insufficient pre-departure preparation, non-matching research focus with the host professor, weak intrinsic motivation, and limited language proficiency. Five out of nine Chinse visiting scholar participants in my research mentioned that they struggled to adjust to the Canadian critical and sharing academic culture but still actively choose "changing themselves" not "changing environment" to adjust to the new situation by engaging themselves in the Canadian academic community. The possible reason is that changing themselves is possible while changing the environment cannot be realized as they are residing in a foreign environment. Three out of nine participants chose to change

themselves mildly by actively taking part in the host academic environment. No matter what they choose to do, learning begins, and this learning constitutes their adjustment experience and exerts a long-term influence on their professional development. Anderson (1994) continues, sojourners who opt to not to deal with their obstacles have two alternatives: "do nothing," or "withdraw and relinquish aspirations to the goal" (p. 306). In this research, only one out of nine participants opted instead for doing nothing when facing the above-mentioned obstacles. His being aware of such obstacles but choosing not to cope with them led to his "failure" of academic adjustment or "mal-adjustment."

Sub-question: What supports did Chinese visiting scholars obtain from the Canadian host institution? Findings show that the host institution offers Chinese visiting scholars office space, and the host professors provide them office hours for face-to-face meetings, academic information, and personal assistance. Two out of three host professors invited Chinese visiting scholars to take part in their projects. Some professors even helped scholars with revising English papers and publications. In addition, the graduate students provided them course and lab information. Other faculty members assisted them with registration. New findings also illustrate that host professors actually provided more support to visiting scholars than what they had reported, from preparing documents before they arrived at the host institution to encouraging and facilitating scholars' involvement in various academic activities.

Sub-question: What are their attitudes to the supports from a Canadian university? Five out of nine participants expressed that they appreciated their professors' and graduate students' support; four out of nine hoped the host institution would provide more academic opportunities; two out of nine expected the host institution would provide

language advancement programs and orientation programs. It is clear that what some visiting scholars expect goes beyond what the host institution can provide. This indicates that a small portion of Chinse visiting scholars overemphasize the influence of situational factors on the realization of their goals and overlook the impact of their internal/personal factors, such as motivation, personal engagement, and self-discipline.

The responses to this sub-question also offer a detailed and comprehensive answer to the first research question: How do Chinese visiting scholars perceive their international academic experiences?

Sub-question: How do Chinese visiting scholars' Canadian visits influence their personal growth and professional development? Responding to this sub-question also provides answers to the second research question: How do Chinese visiting scholars' Canadian academic experiences influence their personal growth and professional development? The findings of this research indicate that their one-year Canadian visit exerts influence on their personal growth and professional development in three ways.

First, no matter whether their visits are academic or non-academic, their one-year international visits directly help them meet one basic requirement of academic promotion, earn credits for applying to higher position, and access more academic opportunities.

Second, their academic endeavours facilitate the productivity and transformative nature of their learning. This learning experience would definitely benefit their course designing and teaching when retuning to China. Their personal growth and professional competence improvement have a long-term influence on their teaching and research.

Third, obstacles in their visit facilitate their learning. Just as Anderson (1994) found in his study, "different obstacles will produce different sets of cognitive, affective,

and behavior events and responses" (p. 309). In my research, due to the personal and situational factors, different Chinese visiting scholars confronted different challenges during their academic pursuit, and these challenges generated different sets of cognitive, affective, and behavioural responses. Their responses to deal with their challenges provided them learning opportunities. Furthermore, inspired by Anderson's findings—the feature of sojourners' adjustment attempts is that they deal with the obstacles by trial and error—my research indicates that scholars proceeded in their response attempts through trials, errors, and re-attempts. Even though three groups, host professors, graduate students, and Chinese netizens, are not very satisfied with some visiting scholars' family-oriented behaviours, the current scholars' continuous trials still constitute a valuable learning experience, which finally facilitates their personal growth and professional development.

Sub-question: How to enhance the Chinese visiting scholar programs? Since not every Chinese visiting scholar is equally successful in their academic adjustment, it is essential for the stakeholders, including Chinese visiting scholars, sponsoring agencies, and the host institutions, to make effort to improve the situation. This issue will be addressed in more details in the following section.

Chinese Visiting Scholars' Academic Adjustment

Multiple data sources (from interviews and documents) and my own 15 years of teaching experience in a Chinese university helped me gain a deep and comprehensive understanding about my Chinese visiting scholar participants' academic adjustment experience in a Canadian university.

A cyclical and dynamic process. First, Chinese visiting scholars' academic adjustment is a cyclical and dynamic process that requires the ability to learn in a cross-cultural environment. At different times, Chinese visiting scholars face different obstacles. As time goes on, some obstacles are overcome, and new obstacles occur due to personal and situational factors. Some difficulties may never be dealt with since vising scholars only stay in Canada for one year. The various challenges and their personal abilities and willingness to solve problems consequently influence scholars' potential for academic adjustment and shape the pace at which they adapt and learn.

Second, every Chinese visiting scholar has their own pace and speed in Canadian academic adjustment. Sojourners demonstrate different degrees, modes, and levels of adaptation (Anderson, 1994). In my research, it is impossible to define "*the* characteristic features of Chinese visiting scholars' academic adjustment in a Canadian university"; every Chinese visiting scholar demonstrates their unique adjustment style with different degrees, modes, and levels of adaptation due to their personal and situational factors. As Kim (1988) notes, "Not all individuals are equally successful in making transitions toward adaptation" (p. 58). The results of my research indicate that some Chinese visiting scholars were very active in pursuing their academic achievement and quickly understood the Canadian academic culture. They interacted with the host institution members beneficially, while others needed more time to figure out their academic adjustment problem.

Learning in an intercultural environment. Chinese visiting scholars' adjustment is also a learning process. Findings indicate that Chinese visiting scholars' visit behaviours are diverse, as some are academic-pursuit oriented, personal-publication

oriented, language-learning oriented, children-education oriented, or even non-scholarship oriented. This diversification leads to an unequal adjustment (adjustment and maladjustment) style.

It is important to point out that both intrinsic motivation and personal engagement play important roles in influencing Chinese visiting scholars' academic adjustment during their Canadian visit. In my research, Chinese visiting scholars reported their different intrinsic motivations. These motivations function as an internal force to guide or "push" them to behave as they want. Guided by their various and personal motivations, not every Chinese visiting scholar is equally successful in the academic adjustment in a Canadian academic milieu. Chinese visiting scholars must take their own responsibility and engage themselves in their academic visit.

New findings are that Chinese visiting scholars' academic-pursuit motivation becomes weaker and that child-education oriented motivation becomes stronger. The results reveal that Chinese visiting scholars prefer to bring their children when visiting Canada and prioritize their children's Western education experience over their own academic pursuits. This research also uncovers that a few scholars just visit a new country to experience a Western lifestyle. This phenomenon primarily results from several of China's social elements. One element is China' birth control policy, under which every Chinese family is allowed to have only one child. Another comes from China's severe domestic competition for compulsory education, for which Chinese parents put high expectations on their only child's academic achievement. This consequently causes Chinese parents to yield their own academic growth to their children's schooling. China's economic increase also contributes to this phenomenon.

More and more Chinese parents are willing to invest in their children's education. Bringing their children abroad while visiting is one of the most economical means. Another reason may be rooted in their internal weak motivation to focus on their own research. China's policy—teacher and researcher's academic promotion is determined by publications and research grants—is widely implemented in all educational institutions including research-oriented, comprehensive, and basic universities, where every scholar is forced to do research without choice. This administrative reinforcement leads to an antipathetic sentiment and undermines their motivation to behave actively as academics.

This research also shows that a full preparation during their pre-departure phase facilities Chinese visiting scholars' academic adjustment during their visit. Though every Chinese visiting scholar prepared the English language (attending training and tests) and met the requirement for being a visiting scholar, they still have relatively little knowledge about Canadian academic culture.

Furthermore, the results indicate that China's institutional requirement—to receive a promotion, a university teacher has to gain at least one year of international experience—does not facilitate Chinese visiting scholar's academic adjustment. This administrative policy only functions as an external force to push scholars to leave China but does not necessarily encourage those whose main purpose for the visit is for their children's education to focus on their own academic pursuits.

Recommendations

As not every Chinese visiting scholar is equally successful in their academic adjustment, it is essential for the stakeholders including Chinese visiting scholars, funding agencies, and the host institution to make efforts to improve the situation.

Chinese Visiting Scholars

Sussman (2000) reports that international students' adaptation emphasizes "proactive attempts to be culturally flexible and resilient within the new cultural environment" (p. 360). Similarly, as learners in a new culture, Chinese visiting scholars' active participation in host activities will help them adjust to the new culture. It is strongly suggested that, in the preparation phase, future visiting scholars need to have a clear research plan and improve their spoken English prior to departure. In this context, they will ideally communicate with their potential host about mutual research interests to ensure they have mutual or at least compatible scholarly interests. Third, Chinese visiting scholars would benefit from cultivating an academic sharing attitude to guide their overseas visit and consider what they should bring to the host institution and country. In the arrival phase, it is wise for Chinese visiting scholars to learn about cultural differences and intercultural competence while actively sharing their research with host fellows. It is highly recommended that they make every effort to engage in events of local culture to broaden their worldview. In the returning phase, scholar should make a concerted effort to use their new knowledge to advance their teaching and research in China.

Funding Agencies

It is vital that the providers and sponsors of teachers' professional development programs take measures to improve Chinese visiting scholar outcomes and ensure that there are mutual benefits for both Canada and China.

China Scholarship Council (CSC). The CSC is responsible for developing a list of expectations for Chinese visiting scholars. The document—Funding Study Abroad

Agreement (CSC, 2018b)—outlines vague regulations for Chinese visiting scholars, when visiting internationally. These regulations stipulated that visiting scholars must submit a report outlining their academic activities every three months. One host professor participant outlined her perspective:

> What are their research outcomes? Of course, they [Chinese visiting scholars] have to write a report for every three or four months, but they [the sponsoring agencies] should have more specific assessment criteria, the current requirement is too general. It is not enough. What are their expectations from their funding agency? What do the funding agencies expect of these people coming out of China for one year? What are their outcomes/ achievements? Particularly, asking what kind of social and cultural impact they [Chinese visiting scholars] are making for international and cross-cultural studies. Have they initiated any institutional collaboration, or mutual exchange? What did they do with their host professor? What did they do for the host institution, for the host professor, and for the graduate students? What did they offer at seminars and workshops to share their research with the institution? What did they present about China, their educational institutions, or any area of their own disciplines? What will they present back to their home institution upon their return to China?

Thus, she suggested that policy makers should reconsider the reasons for funding university teachers' international visits and then present a detailed proposal on how to regular the Visiting Scholar Programs. This would ensure that Chinese visiting scholars' academic sojourn do not just become a personal vacation or a means to securing a promotion at their home institution. First, creating clear detailed guidelines would help

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visiting scholars to standard their behaviours. Then, it is strongly suggested that the funding agencies clearly identify how they would evaluate visiting scholars' cross-cultural and academic outcomes. This could help ensure that the academic sojourn would not be 'academic' in name only.

Chinese university administrators. It is wise for Chinese university policy makers to rethink on the rationality of requiring one-year international experience as being necessary for academic promotion. Granting agencies and visiting scholars need to come to the realization that such sojourns are important for building both new knowledge and reciprocal partnerships. It would be ideal for granting agencies to establish clear criteria as to how visiting scholars would be chosen.

The Host Institution

If host institutions, as partnership organizations, take the initiative to make the Visiting Scholar Programs more beneficial to both parties, they could increase the value of the program. First, if host institutions identify clear starting and finishing dates for this12-month residency, an initial orientation or a scholar welcome reception would be easier to offer to visiting scholars. The content of orientation covers clarifying institutional and collaborative goals, explaining on-campus personal and technological support, and overviewing local and cultural events. It is responsible for the host institution to provide more opportunities for Chinese visiting scholars to meet with host institution faculty members and students. Third, it is wise for Western universities to outline the roles and responsibilities of host professors clearly, and host professors needed to clarify for the visiting scholars their roles and responsibilities during this

residency. This would take the form of financial incentives that would go to the host universities and then to the professor.

Reflection

I present my reflections based on my teaching experience as a Chinese university teacher and learning experience as an internal graduate student.

As a Chinese University Teacher

As a Chinese university teacher, I have been experiencing the same career development stress as the visiting scholar participants have in this study. I feel pressured to publish high-quality publications, apply for grants, and secure promotions. Moreover, the quality of teaching is assessed based not on the in-class teaching and learning performance but on the number of publications and the grant money the teacher secures from outside of their university. Those who have more publications and grants are more likely to be promoted to Associate Dean or Dean of a faculty. In those positions, they often reinforce these standards. However, the quality of teaching and the benefits of students are often neglected. In addition, the academic promotion requirement has been becoming increasingly rigid. "Publish or perish" is the difficulty that every university teacher faces. Those who get their articles published will receive a financial bonus, while those who do not publish will receive a salary reduction as a punishment; some who do not get enough publications in a required period even have their employment terminated. This institutional evaluation process drives every university teacher to focus on applying to grants competitively and getting articles published, rather than on teaching quality through their research. This in turn has the potential to affect students' learning experiences and academic advancement negatively.

Such an experience provides me rich "insider" knowledge. On one hand, I realized that my "insider" knowledge makes it possible for me to establish a relationship with my participants and understand their stress, their goals, their difficulties, and their eagerness, which helps me to gain a deeper understanding of my participants' Canadian visiting experience and their academic adjustment. On the other hand, this relationship triggers ethical issues with my project. As Xu (2015) found, her "insider" position helped her to understand her participants' experience and led her to a new inquiry about her research, which made her research more significant socially, academically and professionally. In my research, my experience shared with my major scholar participants similarly brings me this kind of "wakefulness," awareness, and sense as a sensitive inquirer that allows me to exert my "subjectivity" to explore the truth underneath Chinese visiting scholar participants' academic adjustment.

As a Graduate Student

REB application. My research life began when I became an international student at a Canadian university. I gained enormous research knowledge through two years of graduate work in Canada. For example, I understood the importance of research ethics in the process of research. I began to know how to protect my participants' confidentiality by carefully considering what if any harm my research may bring to my participants. In turn, I started to use such considerations to re-envision the informed consent process. When I was preparing my proposal for the Research Ethics Board (REB) with the guidance of my supervisor, I met the REB office staff once a week to discuss my research procedures, data management, participant recruitment, research risks, and risk management and reduction. This REB application process and discussion with the REB

staff was valuable to me and allowed me to understand the nature of research ethics. During the process of recruiting the participants and data collection, I tried my best to inform them how I would protect their privacy and how they could withdraw their data if they were not comfortable with what they were saying. After interviewing was finished, two participants told me that signing the forms—a Letter of Information for Consent and A Consent Form to Participate in Research—seemed to be too formal for them and gave them a feeling that "doing research is quite serious." One potential participant refused the face-to-face interview when he realized that he would sign his name on the consent forms. He also mentioned that he was not comfortable with me recording his voice. My data collection experience with Chinese visiting scholars indicates that there exist differences between the Chinese research culture and Canadian research culture, and that research ethics is a new concept to most Chinese university researchers and teachers.

Academic participation. My international academic experience as a graduate student facilitates my professional development. Through two years of academic engagement experience, I gained a strong sense of academic participation in the form of idea sharing and mutual contribution. Idea sharing allows innovation. For instance, when I gave a research presentation at a conference hosted by a middle-sized university in Ontario, the audience was generous enough to offer valuable advice relating to my research methods and future research direction. Some researchers shared their research proposals with me and inspired me to move forward in my own research.

Representing my alma mater. Through my interaction with my supervisor and my research committee, I learned the significance of research. A study should serve the community. The findings may help people to solve a problem, modify a program,

understand others, or reconcile conflicts. Without a purpose, research has no meaning. In terms of my study on Chinese visiting scholars, the findings could help Chinese visiting scholars become aware of the major factors influencing academic outcomes and know how to interact with the host institutions effectively. It also has the potential to help host professors and graduate students to better understand Chinese visiting scholars' international experience. In my research, all the Chinse visiting scholar participants expressed that they expected to publish English articles. They expected host professor guidance and additional support from host institutions to meet their academic needs. My findings also help Chinese visiting scholars understand the expectations of host professors, graduate students, and Chinese netizens. Consequently, this study facilitates multiple sides' understanding and beneficial interaction.

Limitations and Future Research

In my research, there are several potential limitations pertaining to participants and the generalization of findings.

Participants. The participants and I share similar teaching experiences in China's higher education and experiences in Canada. Thus, some participants might have believed that their international visits are being evaluated and consequently chose not to share their true experience, which would reduce the authenticity of the data. Second, the participants for this study come from only three faculties at one university. It is hoped that future research will include other faculties and more universities. This study was not able to recruit participants from other faculties due to the limited number of possible participants. Thus, this study by no means intends to reflect entirely the experiences of Chinese visiting scholars.

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Generalization of findings. In qualitative research, generalization is even more complex and controversial compared with quantitative research (Polit & Beck, 2010). Generalization is more widely referred to as transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and "case-to-case translation" by Firestone (1993), which involves the application of findings from an inquiry to a completely different group of people or setting. Lincoln and Guba (1985) explain this translation as transferability, which involves the practical use of findings from qualitative inquiry research to completely different groups or settings. Misco (2007) echoes the same sentiment and terms it "reader generalization." He believes that the practical use of findings in qualitative research is done by readers and consumers of inquiry research. Polis and Beck (2010) support this view by articulating that transferability or reader generalization is a collaborative work by researchers, readers, and consumers of qualitative research. Polis and Beck continue that the researcher's job is to provide detailed descriptions and deep understandings that allow readers and consumers to make broad inferences from extrapolating the findings to other settings. Readers and consumers also assess the degree to which the findings can be applied to new situations. It is the readers and users of research who "transfer" the results and assess how to use the findings. The researchers' job is to immerse themselves in their data and provide a rich description of the cases including the demographic information, contextual information, and the phenomenon itself to support the readers' and consumers' understanding of the research's settings and participants (Firestone, 1990). Thus, in my research, I could not decide to what kind of degree my findings can be used in another group of Chinese visiting scholars. As a case study, the results of this research cannot tell the whole story of all Chinese visiting scholars. Any readers or consumers of my research

should be able to draw additional inferences from my findings and judge its broader applicability.

   Suggestions for future research. Based on the findings from this study, there are five key suggestions for future research. First, according to the daily interaction with Chinese visiting scholars, I learned that a few Chinese visiting scholars did not engage in academic endeavours and were seldom on campus. These Chinese visiting scholars did not participate in this research. It is important for future researchers to explore those visiting scholars' experiences. Second, this research largely neglects Chinese visiting scholars' social integration in Canadian society, which may help fully understand their visiting behaviour and their actual needs in terms of professional development. Third, future research should explore the actual needs of China's post-secondary faculty and visiting scholars, and then provide more evidence for modifying teachers' professional development programs. Fourth, longitudinal research is necessary to understand both the short- and long-term benefits of international academic exchanges. Adjustment is a long-term process. In this research, many Chinese visiting scholar participants mentioned they would utilize the new knowledge and methods they learned in Canada after returning home. Thus, future research can use the longitudinal studies to explore the long-term impact on visiting scholars after their return to China. Longitudinal research should also focus on the visiting scholar programs during different periods to assess whether any changes occur as cultural and economic elements continue to change. Fifth, Chinese visiting scholar programs are sponsored by different agencies: at the national level—China's Scholarship Council, provincial finance department, institutional finance department, and other private organizations. The opinions and views from my

participants cannot present the standpoints of all Chinese visiting scholars from different programs. As I found in my research, different participants sponsored by different programs exhibit various visiting behaviours. It is highly recommended that future research focus on the program stratification to improve this study.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview Questions for Chinese Visiting Scholar Participants

1. Why do you visit this university? What did you expect for your Canadian visiting experience?
2. How do you think of your visiting experiences? What do you gain from this experience? What is/are your favorite/exciting experiences? Why?
3. What difficulties have you met during your visit at a Canadian university? What are the biggest challenges? How do you think of those difficulties?
4. What kind of supports did you get from the faculty you visited?
5. Can you tell me your interactions with graduate students and faculty members?
6. Do you think this visiting experience helped your academic advancement? If yes, can you tell me in what specific aspects? If not, why? How do you plan to employ what you have learned here in your teaching and research when you return to China?

Appendix B: Interview Questions for Host Professor Participants

1. Can you tell me why you decide to host Chinese visiting scholars? What do you think is the value of hosting Chinese visiting scholars?
2. What were your expectations of hosting Chinese visiting scholars? Did you experience any difficulties/challenges being a host?
3. What do you think can be done to make the host/visit experience better?

Appendix C: Interview Questions for Graduate Student Participants

1. Do you know any Chinese visiting Scholars at this university? Could you describe your/other graduate student's interacting experience with Chinese visiting scholars?
2. Do you think it is necessary for faculty members and graduate students interact with Chinese visiting scholars? Why, or why not.
3. What kind of supports do you think you have already provided/will provide to the Chinese visiting scholars? How do you think of the Chinese Visiting Scholar Programs?

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